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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenæum, Week-end Review.*

MADRID still holds the rebel armies at bay, though it is being steadily smashed and burned by their shells and bombs. The air raids in the middle of Tuesday night were one of the most horrible episodes of the war. The casualties—men, women and children—reached a total of many hundreds; public buildings and private houses were knocked to pieces or set into flames that could not be put out. The fiercest fighting has been in the "University City" to the north-west. On the southern side the rebels have not succeeded in crossing the Manzanares River, and the Guadarrama front is still intact. There was—comparatively speaking—a lull on Wednesday; but there is no question of the attack being called off, nor any sign of weakening on the part of the defence. The Government are superior in man power; if they are beaten it will be by sheer weight of metal—and by that hideous engine of destruction, the thermite bomb.

International Complications

Meanwhile the international aspect of the war has become more ominous. Italy and Germany have simultaneously proclaimed their recognition of the rebel regime. General Franco, they declare, "has taken possession of the greater part of Spain . . . and no responsible Government is exercising power in the remaining parts of the country." The latter part of this statement is notoriously untrue; the former is at best a half-truth. Actually the rebels hold 17 provinces with a population of 6,700,000; the Government hold 15, with a population of 7,500,000. But it is not the excuses for this recognition that matter; it is the action which Mussolini and Hitler mean to take. It is hardly to be supposed that they intend to pursue the policy of so-called "non-intervention" with any more honesty than they have hitherto shown. They are talking in Berlin and Rome, as well as in Burgos, of a blockade in the Mediterranean—ostensibly for the purpose of preventing the importation of arms from Russia into the Catalonian ports. But a blockade would affect every maritime Power, and France, in particular, cannot be expected to tolerate such high-handed action.

Another Fascist Alliance?

The news that a Japanese-German agreement is in the making is no matter for surprise; there is a natural affinity between these two aggressive Fascist Powers. We have still to learn the exact terms of the pact, but it is generally assumed that it will be based on a common opposition to Communism and will be proclaimed as a purely "defensive" alliance. Defence against what or whom? Neither the German nor the Japanese regime

seems in any immediate danger from Communism. Nor has either anything to fear from the Soviet Union, which, as everybody knows, desires peace above all things. The boot, in fact, is on the other leg; behind the perpetual flaunting of the Red bogy the Nazis and the Japanese are busy with their own designs on the Ukraine and Siberia. Mussolini also is now credited with the intention of joining this unholy alliance—not so much, presumably, from anti-Communist or anti-Russian prejudice (for he is less obsessed by this phobia than are the other two) as for the political, and possibly economic, advantages he may get out of it. In particular he wants the recognition of his Abyssinian Empire, in return for which Japan would obtain Italy's recognition of Manchukuo. Germany's economic gains from the agreement promise to be more definite and solid. They may, it is said, include an arrangement for the exchange of Manchurian raw materials against German manufactured goods, especially munitions of war, which the Japanese are eager to have. Whether this deal will pay Japan in the long run remains to be seen. Great Britain's position in the Far East, already in a sorry way, will doubtless be worsened.

Hitler's Way

The German Government last Saturday put some more of the remaining shreds of the Treaty of Versailles into the wastepaper basket. Their coup took the form of a unilateral denunciation of the clauses which put the inland waterways—the Rhine, Elbe, Oder, Niemen and Danube, and the Kiel Canal, under international control. No necessity could be pleaded for such a theatrical gesture. Nobody wanted to maintain this control, which was by general consent an inequity as well as an offence to German pride, and actually arrangements were being made for abandoning it. Agreements relating to the Rhine and the Elbe were already drawn up, and others would have followed in due course. But Hitler chose, as is his custom, the aggressive rather than the friendly way. There is obviously nothing to be done on this occasion except to grin and bear it. So far as the freedom of navigation and trade on the rivers is concerned, Germany has given an explicit assurance that this will be maintained, and this assurance must be accepted as satisfactory, though a good many people fear that she may presently increase riverine dues. The real lesson of the coup is one which past experience has already taught us—that Hitler, in the midst of a divided and distracted Europe, is contemptuous of us all, and will take what he wants as it suits him. His next move may be for something bigger.

A Conservative Revolt

The debate in the House of Commons on the Special Areas showed that the hunger marches have not been without effect. At long last, a great body of public opinion has come round to the view—long upheld by the Labour Party practically with but little support—that it is intolerable to leave the Special Areas to rot away, for the most part unaffected by the revival of economic activity in more prosperous districts. The Government, as usual, seems to have been ignorant of the development of public opinion up to the last moment. Despite the demonstrated failure of the Commissioner, armed with notoriously inadequate powers, to make any impression on the problem, the Government proposed merely to renew the existing Act, by including it in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill, without taking any step either to enlarge the powers of the Commissioners or to promote economic revival in the distressed areas by other means. This do-nothing attitude has been too much even for a large number of its own supporters, including practically all who sit for Northern constituencies; and the Government has been compelled to promise further measures. The nature of these measures, beyond their including some exemption from taxation for new enterprises settling in the distressed areas, has not been disclosed, and, we are told, cannot be till the Cabinet has gone into the question. It remains unexplained why the Government, in face of the hunger marches and of Mr. Stewart's resignation, is only now even beginning to realise that something has to be done.

The King in South Wales

While the Government has been thus reluctantly turning its attention to the human tragedy of the distressed areas, the King has gone to look at South Wales for himself. It appears indeed that the royal visit has been planned less with a view to letting the King see the worst than to exhibiting those measures of alleviation which the various social service agencies have been able to apply. The King was to inspect training centres, social clubs, and village settlements rather than to be brought into inconvenient contact with the practical working of the Means Test. Doubtless, he has seen something of this seamiest side of the problem; and on past visits to slums and distressed areas he has always shown a welcome desire to look beneath the surface. But we could hardly expect that Mr. Ernest Brown and Sir Kingsley Wood would encourage him to look at realities. That is why some Labour people in South Wales, who would otherwise have welcomed the royal visit, have refused to be associated with it—feeling that they could not observe the non-political proprieties if the King was to be officially shepherded by Ministers directly responsible for the Means Test and the public assistance system. However, it must take a lot of official shepherding to hide realities in South Wales. The Government is about to cut down the scales of unemployment assistance now paid under the transitional system in many parts of South Wales. But it is not too late, in view of the awakening of public sentiment, to prevent these cuts from being enforced.

The Split in American Labour

The leaders of the American Federation of Labour, which is now holding its Convention at Tampa, in Florida, are manifestly reluctant, now that it comes to the point, to push their vendetta against Mr. John L. Lewis and his Committee for Industrial Organisation, to the extreme of a final split. Mr. Green, the President of the A.F. of L., in his address adopted a conciliatory tone towards the insurgents, urging them to return to the Federation and accept its "democratic" decision upon their claims. Mr. Lewis and his followers, however, with at least a third of the Federation's membership behind them and a far larger potential body of support among the unorganised workers in the steel, automobile, rubber and other great industries, which the A.F. of L. has never been able to control, are unlikely to come back on any terms which involve accepting the discipline of the craft union leaders. Mr. Lewis, much more than Mr. Green, has President Roosevelt's ear, and is

likely to benefit by his new plan for improving "labour relations"; and the craft union leaders have given no sign that the threatened split has aroused them to a sense of the inadequacy of their personal methods of organisation. Whether the A.F. of L. Convention expels the dissidents or not, the dispute is not likely to be settled; for it involves a real clash between two radically different conceptions of Trade Union objective and policy.

Financing the Fascist Front

Official denials notwithstanding, there is no doubt that plans for raising a British loan or loans to assist "economic revival" in Germany and Italy are being strenuously canvassed in the City. Sentiment there among "the people who count" is predominantly semi-Fascist; and, though less concern is felt about Italy, the idea of an economic crash in Hitler's Germany would be most unwelcome to the majority of our financial leaders and, not least, to the Governor of the Bank. Yet, economic troubles in Germany are accumulating. Prices are soaring, and there is a growing deficiency of many food supplies —as witness the new campaign to substitute vast quantities of plum and apple jam for butter. Owing to the operation of her multitudinous clearing agreements and special arrangements for payment, Germany's real foreign trade position is wrapped in mystery. But all the available evidence points to the conclusion that she is living considerably beyond her means. She cannot import the food she needs and at the same time finance raw material imports required for the rearmament programme, or otherwise entailed by the Government's prodigal expenditure on strategic roads and other employment-giving works. German emissaries in London are apparently trying to convince the City that Nazism in bankruptcy would be much more dangerous to Germany's neighbours than if it received sufficient financial assistance to tide things over smoothly. But the argument is not convincing.

The 40-hour Week in France

French domestic affairs have received a good deal less notice in this country since the Spanish rebellion diverted attention to another section of the Popular Front. But M. Blum's Government, despite the difficulties created by the international situation, has been pressing on steadily with its internal reforms. The forty-hour working week was introduced in the coal mines at the beginning of this month; and at the end of the month it comes into force in the whole group of metal and engineering trades. It is to become operative in the building and constructional industries in the middle of December, and in the textile trades on January 1st of next year. By that time it will have been applied also to a considerable number of smaller industries; and quite early in 1937 the change-over to the new system should be virtually complete. Naturally, these reductions in working hours have involved a great deal of negotiation about piecework rates and conditions of labour; and in several industries the employers have fought delaying actions with some success. But on the whole the Blum Government has been able to carry out its promises to the Trade Unions with the minimum of delay. Industrially, France shows signs of settling down under the new conditions, though the internal recovery hoped for as a sequel to devaluation is slow in arriving.

The Public Health

The fifth Public Health Exhibition, which was opened by Sir Kingsley Wood in London last Monday, is an interesting and an encouraging affair. It is well that we should examine and take pride in the advances that have been made. It is legitimate for the Minister to dwell on efforts and achievements in combating disease and improving physique. But it is possible to be too complacent. We have not achieved all we might have done, even with our imperfect knowledge, had the efforts been a little more strenuous. Public health cannot be divorced from politics, and the prejudices and niggardliness of the politicians put the brake on progress. Reforms, large and small, have been delayed year after year through false economy or false principles. The hospital system of the country, for example, is a sorry muddle, despite the beginnings of improvement effected by the break-up of the Poor Law in 1929. The National Health Insurance scheme cries out for amendment and extension; a great host of the insured persons are not adequately doctored and their dependants (save for the maternity benefit) are excluded altogether from the scheme. Above all, there is malnutrition, which is responsible for an incalculable amount of disease and weakness. Sir Kingsley Wood is right in saying that experts are more and more devoting themselves to the study of this urgent problem. But when it comes to taking action on the experts' studies and proposals, what are the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the rest of Sir Kingsley's colleagues doing?

The Law of Libel

In France M. Salengro, the Minister of the Interior, has been hounded to death by a press which is free from fear of legal action, however mendacious and malicious its attacks. The law of libel in this country has at least the advantage that it puts a limit to the use of personal abuse as a weapon of party warfare or as a method of sating individual spite. But the present English law has become ludicrously strained in the opposite direction, and we are glad to see that the Publishers' Association, the Authors' Society, the Empire Press Union and the Federation of Master Printers are sponsoring a Bill for its amendment. Important books on matters of public interest cannot be published because they may be held to libel some individual who may be unknown to the author but who, according to past decisions, might bring an action because of very proper exposure or a coincidence of name and circumstance. It is at least doubtful whether *David Copperfield* or *Nicholas Nickleby* could be safely published to-day. Printers are equally liable with the author and publisher, though in many cases it would be as reasonable to prosecute a railway company as an accessory for a murder because the corpse was deposited in a cloak room. The damages, left to the jury, may be of any size and bear no relationship to any actual damage caused. A meeting to discuss the libel laws has been called by the International Association of Writers and by the National Council for Civil Liberties. It meets in the Essex Hall at 8 p.m. on November 25th and will be addressed by a number of well-known people including Rebecca West, J. B. S. Haldane, A. P. Herbert, L. A. G. Strong and Mr. Gerald Barry.

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APPALLING FRANKNESS

FROM flamboyant characters we all expect "blazing indiscretions." In the economy of nature it is the function of a Lloyd George or a Churchill to administer these shocks periodically; the public health demands that service from them. When a normally placid statesman, whose foible is good temper and complacency, stumbles with awkward movements out of his rut, the effect, as in Mr. Baldwin's performance of last week, is one of surprise; it breaks the rules of the cosmos. Veracity carried to this pitch is unusual, more especially when it takes the form of a confession that the speaker had economised truth to vanishing point. Actually his "frankness," "appalling" though it was, understated the facts. He concealed from the public, as he now tells us, the Government's intention to rearm on a great scale, because he foresaw that, if he had blurted out the truth, the electorate in the mood of pacifism disclosed by the Fulham by-election and the Peace Ballot might have inflicted a defeat upon his party. But the case was decidedly worse than this. In a series of categorical statements, which were spread all over the country during the Election, he and his colleagues explicitly and indignantly denied that there was "any question of huge armaments or materially increased forces." All they proposed to do was, as Mr. Neville Chamberlain put it, to "fill up the gaps in our defences."

This 1935 election was certainly not a unique case of deception in the history of democracy. But the deception has rarely been as deliberate as in this instance. Mr. Gladstone was certainly sincere when he fought the Midlothian campaign as the unbending foe of Imperialism, and did not foresee that at the first opportunity he would himself be bombarding Alexandria and occupying Egypt; he really did dislike Imperialism when Disraeli practised it. Nor was President Wilson consciously deceiving the American public, when in November, 1916, he got himself re-elected as "the man who would keep America out of the war" which he entered six months later. He did sincerely admire himself as the man "too proud to fight," and though he had been drifting perceptibly into the war for some months before the election he had as yet no fixed intention to abandon neutrality. But Mr. Baldwin diddled the electors not once but twice on this occasion. He concealed and even denied his intention to rearm on a great scale, while over Abyssinia he behaved with an even more monstrous cynicism. Few statesmen keep their electoral promises with meticulous honesty, but few break them within six weeks as he did, when without a qualm he agreed to partition the victim whom he had sworn before us all to defend. Experience of life, but more especially of political life, has taught us to be on our guard against notoriously honest men. Theirs is a peculiarly deadly technique. They tell the truth nine times with a bluff and "appalling" frankness in order the better to mislead us on the tenth occasion.

Mr. Baldwin does not pose as an academic person. Under his shining outer mantle of truthfulness he wears the rough homespun of the practical man. Is that also a disguise? For on this occasion he theorised, as Adam did, to excuse his fall. It was the fault of Democracy. She is a slow-witted lady, who in her mental processes always lags two years behind the Dictators. If that be so, how admirably these two are matched. For we should have said that this ponderous movement was itself the most salient characteristic of the other inhabitant of Eden. It may be, though we doubt it, that there actually was some difference of pace in the thinking of this pair over rearmament. We can recall that famous duel between Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Churchill over the rate of German construction in the air. Certainly he was not then aware of any danger, nor had he any doubt at that time of British ability to maintain a great margin of superiority over Nazi building. When it turned out that he was mistaken, he blamed not Democracy, but Aristocracy in the person of Lord Londonderry. But let us dismiss this contentious topic and examine two others. Was it from fear of shocking the nerves of Democracy, that Mr. Baldwin delayed from December, 1934, to September, 1935, before he would consider any steps to check the open preparations of Mussolini for his Abyssinian adventure? On the contrary, Democracy was on the alert, and through her usual channels of expression, in the House and in the press, she was trying with growing desperation to prod her Adam into action. Or take, again, the case of the Depressed Areas. Will Mr. Baldwin inform us presently that it was out of regard for the nerves of his Eve that he acted so slowly and with such cautious moderation? Would he have lost the election if he had done a year ago what Mr. Chamberlain now promises to do before next March? On the contrary, in this case also Democracy was very much on the alert, and did her best in curtain-lectures of wearisome frequency to goad her Adam into movement. This self-portrait of a Premier, himself as brisk as any Führer, who drawls merely because Democracy thinks slowly, is the least convincing of all this artist's imaginative creations. We incline to the conclusion that Mr. Baldwin was lying when he said he lied.

Let us, however, admit that there is a measure of truth in his contention that democracies think more slowly than Dictators. We are disposed, however, to generalise this statement. The Dictator is merely the expert, the professional politician, who has swept rival experts out of his path, and contrived to silence them. But are his mental processes appreciably more rapid than those of experts in democratic countries? The expert has this advantage over the average citizen, that it is his business to concentrate all his attention throughout the whole of his working day on political problems. The grocer or the architect may have a swift brain enough, but he can spare only half an hour a day over his newspaper for thought about such questions; thereafter his own affairs absorb him. The expert has access to a well-stocked library; he consorts with his fellows and they exchange ideas; he usually concentrates by setting out his views in memoranda, articles or lectures. Naturally the expert thinks more quickly than the man in the street, forecasts the future with more assurance, and adjusts his opinions to a changing world very much more rapidly. This is true, or should be true, in almost equal degrees of the civil servant, the journalist and the professional politician. There may sometimes result, especially when passion plays a part, that time-lag in the thinking of Democracy which Mr. Baldwin supposes to be normal. This happened over reparations. Mr. Keynes was not only the expert who broke down the average man's delusions, but he was

much the ablest and also the most courageous of the experts. He remarked when he wrote his *Economic Consequences of the Peace* that many experts, including leading politicians, knew the facts, admitted them in private, but for their own reasons did not choose to speak. That was a kindly understatement. For there were other experts who should have known better, who prepared the original fantastic estimates of what Germany could pay, and spent the next twelve years in a rearguard action to defend their own follies. It was not the grocers and architects who invented the legend of this crock of gold. It was bankers and treasury officials who first spun these figures, and politicians and journalists who passed them on to the plain man. Democracy is not the villain of this piece. Mr. Baldwin's Eve is a passive lady, much too busy showing fig leaves to do any original thinking of her own. She trusts the experts. If they are, as Mr. Baldwin says he was, too cowardly to tell her the truth, it is an impertinence to lay the blame on her slow wits. This cowardice is unfortunately no monopoly of his. Editors sometimes suffer from this same fear, though it is more often the dread of the advertiser that scares them into silence than any honest fear of their readers. The superiority of the Dictator is not that he can disregard his public. Indeed, your Hitler or Mussolini prepares the mind of his public with a thoroughness and a foresight that our indolent Baldwins never display. Their superiority lies not so much in their courage as in their mastery of the technique of persuasion. It is true that they supplement these talents by the use of force. Mr. Baldwin prefers fraud as the less un-English of two available expedients. Neither is necessary if the politician combines a modicum of courage with some knowledge of his job.

BARCELONA

THE first thing one notices about going to Barcelona is the peculiar meaningful handshakes of one's friends. Accompanied though they are by some such phrase as "I wish I were going too," one cannot avoid detecting in the farewell a moment of undertaker heartiness, of mortuary appraisal. In the early morning among the lagoons, the brown landscape and rainy sky of Languedoc, one begins to share it, only at the Spanish frontier does it completely disappear. As a rule the change from Cerbère to Port Bou is one from gaiety and comfort to gloom and emptiness; to-day it is the Spanish end which is alive. The first thing one notices is the posters, extremely competent propaganda, of which that of a peasant's rope-soled foot descending on a cracked swastika in a cobbled street is the most dramatic. The frontier is guarded by cultivated German and Italian anti-fascists and one begins at once those discussions of political ideology which are such a feature of present day republican Spain. "You journalists are the worst enemies of a revolution," explained the Italian, "you all come here with letters like yours; then you go back and write Right-wing propaganda about us." "Why can't you admit that England is not prepared to help any democracy until its rearmament is carried out, when it will be too late?" said the other. Down in the little harbour the militiamen, in their blue uniforms and forage caps, were fishing with bits of starfish. The sombre Spanish train had been painted all along the carriages with crude pictures of troops departing and harvests being gathered in. As it drew out into the autumn sunshine one first became conscious of the extraordinary mixture of patriotic war-fever, revolutionary faith, and that absolutely new and all pervading sense of moral elevation which is the most dominating note in Catalonia since the revolution. For here one never says "since the military rebellion," "since the Fascist revolt," but simply "since the Revolution" or "since the 19th of July." At the end of the train were two carriages of anarchist troops, mostly under twenty, who waved their black and red banners, pointed their rifles at one, and in return for some cigarettes burst into a shout which was taken up all down the train of "Viva la Revolucion."

It is in Barcelona that the full force of the anarchist revolution becomes apparent. Their initials, C.N.T. and F.A.I., are everywhere. They have taken over all the hotels, restaurants, cafés, trains, taxis, and means of communication, as well as all theatres, cinemas, and places of amusement. Their first act was to abolish the tip as being incompatible with the dignity of those who receive it, and to attempt to give one is the only act, short of making the Fascist salute, that a foreigner can be disliked for.

Spanish anarchism is a doctrine which has gone through three stages. The first was the conception of pure anarchy which grew out of the writings of Rousseau, Proudhon, Godwin, and to a lesser extent, Diderot and Tolstoy. The essence of this anarchist faith is that there exists in mankind a natural trend towards nobility and dignity; human relations based on a love of liberty combined with a desire to help each other (as shown for instance in the mutual generosity of the poor in slum districts in cases of sickness and distress) should in themselves be enough, given education and the right economic conditions, to provide a working basis for people to live on; state interference, armies, property, would be as superfluous as they were to the early christians. The anarchist paradise would be one in which the instincts towards freedom, justice, intelligence and "*bondad*" in the human race develop gradually to the exclusion of all thoughts of personal gain, envy, and malice. But there exist two stumbling blocks to this ideal—the desire to make money and the desire to acquire power. Everybody who makes money or acquires power, according to the anarchists, does so to the detriment of himself and at the expense of other people, and as long as these instincts are allowed free run there will always be war, tyranny, and exploitation. Power and money must therefore be abolished altogether. At this point the second stage of anarchism begins, that which arises from the thought of Bakunin, the contemporary of Marx. He added the rider that the only way to abolish power and money was by direct action on the bourgeoisie in whom these instincts were incurably ingrained, and who took advantage of all liberal legislation, all concessions from the workers, to get more power and more money for themselves. "The rich will do everything for the poor but get off their backs," Tolstoy has said. "Then they must be blown off," might have been Bakunin's corollary. From this time (the Eighties) dates militant anarchism with its crimes of violence and assassination. In most of its strongholds, Italy, Germany, Russia, it was either destroyed by Fascism or absorbed by Communism, which has usually seemed more practical, realisable, and adaptable to industrial countries; but in Spain the innate love of individual freedom, a personal dignity of the people, made them prefer it to Russian Communism, and the persecution which it underwent was never sufficient to blot it out. Finally, in the last few years it has gone through a third transformation; in spite of its mystical appeal to the heart anarchism has always been an elastic and adaptable faith, and looking round for a suitable machinery to replace state centralisation it found syndicalism, to which it is now united. Syndicalism is a system of vertical rather than horizontal Trade Unions, by which, for instance, all the workers on this paper, editors, reviewers, printers and distributors, would delegate members to a syndicate which would negotiate with other syndicates for the housing, feeding, amusements, etc., of all the body. This anarcho-syndicalism through its organ, the C.N.T., has been able to get control of all the industries and agriculture of Catalonia and much of that in Andalusia, Valencia and Murcia, forming a more or less solid block from Malaga to the French frontier with considerable power also in the Asturias and Madrid. The executive militant spear-head of the body is the Federacion Anarquistica

Iberica, usually pronounced as one word, *FAI*, which, partly owing to acts of terrorism, partly to its former illegality, is clothed in mystery to-day. It is almost impossible to find out who and how many belong to it.

The ideal of the C.N.T. and the F.A.I. is libertarian Communism, a Spain in which the work and wealth is shared by all, about three hours' work a day being enough to entitle anyone to sufficient food, clothing, education, amusement, transport, and medical attention. It differs from Communism because there must be no centralisation, no bureaucracy, and no leaders; if somebody does not want to do something, the anarchists argue, no good will come of making them do it. They point to Stalin's dictatorship as an example of the evils inherent in Communism. The danger of anarchism, one might argue, is that it has become such a revolutionary weapon that it may never know what to do with the golden age when it has it, and may exhaust itself in a perpetual series of counter-revolutions. Yet it should be an ideal not unsympathetic to the English, who have always honoured freedom and individual eccentricity and whose liberalism and whiggery might well have turned to something very similar had they been harassed for centuries, like the Spanish proletariat, by absolute monarchs, militant clergy, army dictatorships and absentee landlords.

Life in Barcelona begins very early—that is to say in the small hours, when the cocks start crowing, as in the tropics, and batches of the sixteen thousand reinforcements for Madrid start leaving. Later, after breakfast, it is fun to walk down the Ramblas while the sun beats warmly through the wet planes and shines on the long rows of flower stalls, covered with roses, lilies, violets and tuberoses, till one reaches the harbour. Most of the houses bear banners and initials; "we have too many banderas" is a common saying, There is the red and black of the F.A.I. and C.N.T., the red with joined hands of the U.G.T. (Caballero socialists), the hammer and sickle of the Catalan Communists, the separatist flag of Catalonia, and that of the Trotskyist P.O.U.M. Gradually one learns to differentiate between the faces; where there used to be the inevitable couple of priests mumbling about pesetas, or the business men in their wicker armchairs, one learns to recognise the U.G.T. type of pleasant and intelligent young Socialist, the restaurant-manager or head-waiter face (right wing, Besteiro or Prieto Socialist) and the types of the C.N.T. and F.A.I. The C.N.T., since it contains a great many Murcians and also appeals to all the thorough-going have-nots, includes the most alarming of the faces met with in Barcelona and also most of the young militia-women. Among the F.A.I. is to be found the pure anarchist type, the long head with high brow and thin nose, enlivened by the mixture of mysticism with revolutionary energy which is so characteristic. These are the men who saved Barcelona, who destroyed a whole military division within twelve hours and rushed a battery planted in the Paseo de Gracias in open cars armed only with kitchen knives. Along the Ramblas are booths selling the local newspapers (no others are obtainable) together with photographs of Marx, Lenin, Kropotkin and the chiefs of anarchist columns, Santillan, Ascaso, Durruti.

An English journalist, chiefly on account of our non-intervention policy and the Fascist propaganda (headed by the ghoulish *Daily Mail*) of our newspapers, is not a popular figure. The Spaniards do not understand non-intervention nor why it should be harder for Madrid and Barcelona to get arms than for Burgos and Seville. They consider that the battle between the democracies and the tyrannies of the world is being fought out by them on their soil, and are inclined to ask if we think they would refuse an English Labour Government arms supposing the English Fascists to be attacking London with Indian troops.

In the afternoons one can wander about the old town or the harbour or the crowded patios and the Generalidad or the park with its zoo, or up in the gardens of the Montjuich where the exhibition used to be. The churches are mostly locked and blackened, like our city churches; the Sagrada Familia has been destroyed except for its extraordinary front, whose two vast towers now stand up like a radio-station. I was five days in Barcelona and only once was stopped for my papers, and that was on the way up to the military post on the Tibidabo. When I told the anarchist guards I wanted to look at the view they let me proceed. One could walk about the patios of the Generalidad or into the actual rooms of the anarchist building quite freely, nor did I ever come across any kind of rowdiness or even hear a shot fired. Yet the American residents have to report three times a day to their consul to show they are still alive and there are rumours of some English living in a kind of compound down by the sea. At night the Ramblas become a huge milling crowd of people, radios blare out, cafés fill up. The streets are very badly lit and acquire a rather sinister wartime aspect. Small things bring home the civil war, like the restaurant menus, where all dishes including food from enemy parts of the country (sea food from the Atlantic, butter and mutton from the West) are struck off, and the notices in every room about air-raids. The cinemas are all open, showing *Top-Hat* and a gruesome anarchist film of the storming of Sietaimo. Afterwards there is the café of the Oriente. It is huge and badly lit; three enormous coffee machines glitter in the darkness and there is a counter which sells cakes and sausages. It is used almost entirely by men and women of the militia, who clank their rifles up against the bar. It is sitting there at night that one gets the completest picture of the world's youngest nation, anarchist Catalonia, fighting its first war. A man will begin to talk about the siege of Madrid, show one his anarchist permit, explain how he drives a lorry there every week, hand one an enormous revolver to look at, and suddenly pay for any drinks one has had before his appearance. "Look here. You can't pay for that whisky, I had it before you came." "But I feel like it; besides, what's money anyhow? We shall soon have abolished all that." "Very well then, you must have one with me." "But I don't want to have one with you, why should I have to have a drink with you because I give you one? It is not dignified or logical—next year, perhaps, you will give me a drink; you do not understand our anarchist principles," and he goes out to his lorry. After one o'clock the streets are deserted and silent except for the screech of the brakes of the anarchist patrols as they tear down the Ramblas or face each other suddenly at corners.

One thing that is perfectly clear, after seeing Barcelona, is that, in any ultimate sense, it cannot be conquered. Catalonia, unlike the rest of Republican Spain, is a compact country; its language frontiers are now its class frontiers, and the whole population of the Eastern coast, so rich in industry and man power, are now racially and politically solid. These provinces could also much more easily attain unity of command. President Companys is a figure of enormous power and prestige who works in co-ordination with the now combined forces of the C.N.T. and U.G.T. There are six hundred thousand anarchists in Catalonia and they have already, without outside help, the organisation and determination necessary. A Spanish Fascist in Paris has declared: "There are two million people in Spain we have to get rid of, and we have already accounted for five hundred thousand." He will find he has miscounted. It is much more interesting to speculate what will happen afterwards, when the victorious anarchists wish to abolish the State, and the victorious Socialists to preserve it. While everybody, including the anarchists prophesied another civil war, it now seems possible that it can be avoided. The Coalition between the two parties is working well and they may be able to divide up Spain in such a way that the anarchists recognise a highly decentralised government as a necessary *étape* on the road to its complete disappearance, or they may themselves become corrupted.

I fear I have written all this and still not explained the feeling one gets in this city. The pervading sense of freedom, of intelligence, justice and companionship, the enormous upthrust in backward and penniless people of the desire for liberty and education are things that have to be seen to be realised. It is as if the masses, the mob in fact, credited usually only with instincts of stupidity and persecution, should blossom into what is really a kind of flowering of humanity. We are used to

processions in London, either State pageants or dismal affairs of policemen and mackintoshes, but round the procession in Barcelona on Sunday there were no police. Two hundred thousand people marched by in the sunshine—Anarchists, Socialists, Communists, Federalists, in their brown and green with their bands playing seductive sardanas, foresters with their axes, peasants with their hoes, nurses, children, regiments of militia-girls, all singing and watched over by a few stewards with badges. They took five hours to pass. Anyone who could see this could see that here was something which it would be an unimaginable piece of human malignity to destroy, which it would, indeed, be impossible to destroy; for such a movement can only go underground, as it has gone in Seville and Saragossa, to reappear in some Sicilian Vespers with a bitterness that is now lacking. Meanwhile we must learn to sit quiet and practise non-intervention, an arrangement by which every democracy is allowed to remain in the privacy of its own burrow, awaiting the visit of the stoats.

CYRIL CONNOLLY

A LONDON DIARY

THE most striking characteristic of this country at the moment is a greatly increased political consciousness frustrated by an extreme mental confusion. Everywhere I hear the same story. Labour audiences, especially since Edinburgh, are cold about the Labour Party, but immediately alert and curious about any reference to a Popular Front. To them the conception usually implies a working alliance on a short programme accepted by the Labour Party, the more radical Liberals and the Communists. On the other side many people who usually vote Conservative are fed up with Mr. Baldwin and not at all keen about Mr. Chamberlain; some of them are toying with the idea of a reconstructed National Government which would include the Liberals and the Right wing of the Labour Party. Amongst such people—and they include many business men—the most talked of leader at the moment is Mr. Winston Churchill, who is still distrusted by regular Party men, but is gaining popularity as an extremely able fellow who knows his own mind and is not taken in by German propaganda. He still talks about collective security and the League, even though Geneva is now an obvious camouflage for an alliance. Putting it that way pleases the rank and file of organisations like the League of Nations Union. Mr. Baldwin's admission that he deceived the country because he would not have been returned to office if he had not, did really appal the House of Commons. Conservative Party organisers now feel it will be difficult to persuade the electorate to believe their propaganda in the future. They are not comforted by being told that Mr. Baldwin won't suffer himself because he will shortly retire from the leadership. Mr. Baldwin's speech certainly dismayed other people, and one experienced Lobby correspondent tells me that he has never known any speech have so devastating an effect. The joke is that the phrase about "appalling frankness" was missed in the news agency's reports, and that none of the newspapers immediately realised the significance of Mr. Baldwin's speech. Some papers simply would not believe that he had really said it and none of them commented the next morning. Perhaps they were so flabbergasted that it took them a day to regain enough wind to say anything at all. Mr. Baldwin has long traded on a reputation for honesty. But people are beginning to say that, if honesty means only a series of honest confessions about dishonesty in the past, a bit of cleverness might be a welcome change. The most charitable description of Mr. Baldwin is Mr. Churchill's. He referred to Mr. Baldwin the other day as a "pale reflection of everybody's perplexities."

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The situation is well illustrated by three forthcoming meetings at the Albert Hall. They are all likely to be packed out; they are all non-party. The first is on the 27th of this month, when every seat is already booked for a Dick Sheppard Peace Pledge meeting. I am told that the seats for an overflow meeting are also sold out and that there is to be an open-air overflow from the overflow. The second Albert Hall meeting is in aid of the Spanish Medical Unit and corresponds politically to the Left Popular Front idea. I hear that Harry Pollitt and Sir Stafford Cripps are among the speakers. The third meeting is unusual and intriguing. It is in "Defence of Freedom and Peace," and is to be held on Thursday, December 3rd, and to be addressed by Winston Churchill, Lord Lytton and Lady Violet Bonham-Carter, with Sir Walter Citrine in the chair. This meeting is only just announced and tickets can, I gather, still be obtained from St. Stephen's House, Westminster. It is the result of a series of small private meetings which have been attended by people of all parties—including some very distinguished names. The upshot is a short "statement of principles," demanding British leadership in foreign affairs, and affirming a faith in democratic Government and a determination to resist armed aggression.

* * *

I gather that no new party or organisation is to be formed and that Winston Churchill and his colleagues are prepared to speak at meetings in defence of these objects under any auspices and at any place where they are asked. The Albert Hall meeting is to be under the auspices of the League of Nations Union, which obviously makes it easier for Sir Walter Citrine to take the chair. For Sir Walter to appear on the platform of a League of Nations Union meeting, even in company with Mr. Winston Churchill, does not, of course, compromise the Labour Party. But where is all this leading to? The immediate result of this group's activities is to strengthen the anti-German section of the Cabinet, and I think that the rather firmer tone of Mr. Eden's last speech is to be attributed in part to the knowledge this group had helped to spread that not everyone in England has fallen for Herr von Ribbentrop. I can see possible further developments. Sir Stafford Cripps said in the letter he wrote recently to this journal commenting on Dr. Dalton's article that he could not see how the Right wing leaders of the Labour Party could logically refrain from joining the National Government. Of course they could not join the pro-German, semi-Fascist wing of the Government, and I do not suppose they have any immediate intention of combining with anybody—even with themselves. But the logic of present politics is surely the formation of a Centre Front with Winston Churchill as the effective Leader, if not as the potential Prime Minister. Such a Front could include the more progressive Tories, the Liberal Party and some Labour leaders. It would leave the extreme Right Conservative Party on the one hand, and a Socialist Labour Party on the other. I am not suggesting that this will happen, but I regard it as a possibility. It would at least have the merit of clarifying issues.

* * *

A new 100 per cent. *ad valorem* tariff duty is announced by the Import Duties Advisory Committee, on purchases from abroad of articles "for use for, or in connection with" the Coronation. The list of articles whose exclusive manufacture in this country is regarded by the Committee as "specially proper," and whose loyal employment on a vast scale by patriotic citizens is apparently contemplated, makes curious reading. First, naturally enough, come flags of the British Empire; foreign flags appear to escape the special duty. But, provided they bear a picture of King Edward, any member of the Royal Family, any Royal badge or insignia, or any building associated with the ceremony, Coronation articles are held to include such diverse merchandise as jewellery, silk or rayon handkerchiefs, toys, powder boxes and enamelled mugs. I gather people are expecting to make large fortunes out of things like Coronation buttons, and I hear that one may hope to get as much as fifty guineas a week for a flat in a good position during the Coronation period. On the other hand, the element of uncertainty about the Coronation is considerable, and I hear that insurance brokers are beset with demands for policies from those who wish to

insure against the Coronation not occurring next year, and that they ask a twenty-five per cent. premium.

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One aspect of German propaganda methods that receives too little attention is illustrated by the case of Elizabeth Wiskemann. This journal told the story of how she was arrested in Berlin and questioned at the headquarters of the "Gestapo," because of an article which had appeared in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. She could not be sure whether it was her article, because she was only shown fragments of it in a German translation. She was not charged with any offence and received no apology. Subsequent inquiries, made officially on her behalf, have elicited the information from the Nazis that she perpetrated "an unparalleled libel and calumny" against Germany, and that as she had since written a "violent" attack in the *Daily Herald* her return to Germany would be "undesirable for the present." Note the results. Miss Wiskemann, whose writing is well known not only in this journal, but also in the monthly and quarterly reviews, is an acknowledged authority on foreign affairs and an extremely capable investigator. She is excluded from Germany. The same kind of pressure is put on the correspondents of other papers. Some of them have been expelled, others allowed to remain under a threat of expulsion unless they send mendacious reports about everything being lovely in the Nazi garden. Some newspapers which might print honest reports if they could get them from their own correspondents give in to pressure. They want German news and so let their correspondents know that they must at all costs keep in with the authorities—which is one reason why these papers report so little of the truth about Germany.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mr. M. J. Starforth.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

They Saved Franco: Major Hugh Pollard, firearms expert to the "Sporting and Dramatic," is here seen with his daughter Diana (black habit) and Miss Dorothy Watson. "Disguised" as tourists they took an aeroplane from England to Tenerife, rescued General Franco, and sent him to Tetuan where the anti-Red standard was set up. It takes good foxhunters to do jobs like this.—Caption beneath photograph in *Sporting and Dramatic News*.

Although, owing to the present situation in Spain, certain farms and coverts have inevitably suffered, I feel that anyone who would care for a pleasant bit of hunting in a more agreeable climate than usual, might do worse than try a season with the Calpé Hounds.—*Riding*.

Watching anxiously over the past week's events in Madrid, lovers of animals must have speculated sadly on the fate of the city's legions of horses.—*Sunday Times*.

Messages received in Rome from Addis Ababa state that Italian columns are continuing to occupy peacefully the territories in Western Abyssinia. On Sunday 30 bombers made what are described as demonstrative flights over the regions of Wallega and Jimma.—*Times*.

Mr. Alfred Denville, Unionist M.P. for Newcastle Central Division, announces that he will present £5 to the mother of each baby born in that Division on Coronation Day. The mother's name must appear on the current register of voters.—*Scotsman*.

Valencia Raisins ! !
Just arrived.
10*d*. a lb.
Straight from the War ! —Shop window show-card.

"God speaks to this Generation" is the title chosen by a student committee, which sees in the events of our day, not only moral and spiritual bankruptcy, but the signs of the power and love of God.—*Student Christian Movement*.

THE FARM BOARDS—FACTS AND FANCIES

THERE is every indication that the farm Marketing Boards have become part of our national economic life. They will become changed or modified in structure, outlook or method of working, and they may or may not be followed by others. But it is inconceivable that the seed of a system that promises a semblance of uniformity and order in production and marketing in what was once the most anarchic of our industries will not take permanent root. Naturally the Boards have enemies, particularly among those who have hitherto thrived on exploiting the lack of cohesion among some 300,000 scattered farmers. There is also legitimate criticism of the attitude of the producer-controlled board when it merely sees in collective marketing an opportunity for producers to have their turn in plundering the public. But to me it will remain a perpetual mystery why it has been left for so many of the very ones who once were most ardent in preaching the gospel of 100 per cent. co-operative marketing to meet it, when it comes, with only destructive criticism and rather futile sallies.

Nor do some critics stop at this. There has been as well deliberate misrepresentation, such as the calumny that the Boards are "restricting production." It is amazing that such statements can be publicly made. Since the Boards were established, our milk and pig production have surpassed all records. Our potatoes have supplied a greater proportion of our needs than ever before, and the Board has granted extensions of the basic acreage amounting to 30,000 acres in excess of the original, which was above the highest potato acreage recorded since 1922.

The most important event in milk marketing in the past year has been the dispute between the Board and the distributors and the subsequent report by the Committee of Investigation. The Board had prescribed a price of 15*s*. 6*d*. per dozen gallons, the distributors wanted to pay 15*s*. 1*d*. and to receive certain other concessions. The Committee of Investigation decided that 15*s*. 3*d*. was a fair price. But they made other important observations and findings. For the first time they gave official recognition to the fact that farmers must produce 20 per cent. of milk surplus to liquid requirements to make certain that the public can obtain its fresh milk at all times and in all places. They also drew attention to the chaos and waste in milk distribution, citing instances such as twenty distributors operating in one street. So great is the disorder that while some of the larger firms are making very good profits indeed, there are many small men whose businesses are so precarious and minute that they live on the border line of existence and the 15*s*. 6*d*. the Board had demanded would have finished them off. If they went, the larger firms would absorb their milk rounds and become even more strongly entrenched. The Committee stated that it was in the organisation of distribution that the greatest scope for the reduction of milk prices lay and suggested that the Board might assume this responsibility "through the medium of prescribed contracts." Their findings are interesting. Having rapped the Board over the knuckles for asking too much this time, they strongly hinted that the Board should apply pressure to force the distributors to organise their business to reduce prices to the consumer.

Much has been said of the anomaly of milk being turned into butter and cheese at 4*d*. per gallon and at a loss to the producer when there are millions in need of it, who cannot pay the present price of 2*s*., but would gladly pay 1*s*. At least there would seem to be a chance to make a good start here by supplying cheap milk to all public institutions, such as hospitals, asylums, unions, etc. But it is usually forgotten that the manufactured milk has been reaching the public in the form of butter and cheese at prices lower than have ever previously been known. Butter and cheese prices during 1935 were 11 per cent. below the pre-war prices, and there is some justice in the farmers' contention that the public cannot have it both ways—cheaper milk as well as butter and cheese below the 1914 price

Nor must it be forgotten that our butter and cheese must compete with imports subsidised on a very extensive scale by their respective countries. On the other hand, it might be better to raise butter and cheese prices to cheapen liquid milk prices.

Yet it is true that the Milk Board has failed to give anyone the impression that it is striving very ardently to sell cheaper milk—which is an error in tactics as well as in strategy—and the increase of only 6,000,000 gallons in liquid milk sales by the Board last year, in spite of much publicity, is not a great tribute to the Board's powers of salesmanship. Here, I think, another error is being made. Can anyone, in these days, hope to sell an impure article? The Board has taken one step in the right direction by its "accredited milk" scheme, but the accredited standard is no higher than that of ordinary decency and is attainable (although for other reasons the necessary licence may not be granted) by any dairy farmer fit to be in business. Yet only 33 per cent. of our milk passes this test. Think of a fruit canner or maker of tooth paste or anyone else who said: "Please buy my goods. One-third of them are up to standard, and although the other two-thirds are mixed up with them they aren't really as dangerous to you as the doctors say and some day we hope to get them better." It is surely the first essential of salesmanship to offer a sound article, even if one is not paid extra for refraining from turning out diseased goods. It is significant that the handful of tuberculin-tested milk producers outside the Board increased their liquid sales last year by 10,000,000 gallons. In the past year the Board has also been developing its manufacturing policy by establishing its own factories. This is sound business from the point of view of producers, for it remains true that whoever controls the milk surplus controls the milk industry.

The Pigs Board has been famous for its secrecy, its private intrigues, the disloyalty of its registered producers and its unerring ability to be left with the worst of the bargain. But now things are a little better. The Board has begun to tell its members more of what it is doing and has set up regional committees to maintain closer contact. Two business men have been brought into the Board's councils (but only under pressure from the Minister), and a better contract was brought out at an early date. Unfortunately it was not very well "put across" to the farmers, and the Board seemed unduly frightened of the criticism, some of it by no means disinterested, with which it was received. After a prolonged dispute, with rather a childish exchange of "ultimatums" between producers and curers, the matter was referred to Sir Robert Greig for arbitration. Sir Robert had been chairman of a joint committee of the Pigs and Bacon Boards that had produced the original contract. The initiative he had shown in this (he bravely took the risk of being accused of exceeding his duties), set up an excellent precedent. Together with his selection as arbitrator, it gives a clear indication of the lines along which all marketing boards may advance. Control of the producer for the producer by the producer sounds grand in theory. In practice it means dragging a collection of otherwise leisured farmers from their natural element and cooping them up in London to face a task that might daunt a Harry McGowan. Much of the outcry against producer control comes from other sectional interests who see threatened the control they themselves have exercised for so long, and no one seems to mind producers controlling our tobacco, motor cars and other commodities. But there is reason in the contention that no sectional interest of any description should be given complete, monopolistic control of so vital a commodity as food, and there seems to be a unique opportunity to use on the boards that type of successful man turned public servant that we still produce.

The Potato Board has come in for its full share of obloquy because, for natural and economic reasons over which it had no control, the price of potatoes rose on account of a shortage. The true facts are that the acreage did not sink nor the price of potatoes rise as much as in other light crop years following two seasons of very bad prices. If last season and the one before be taken together, the grower did not receive any more than a very modest profit. Potatoes in the past season have been as high as £8 per ton on the farm, but in former years, before the formation of the Board, they have been £12 and £13 and people accepted it as a vagary of nature and/or our economic system. Yet the Board missed a great opportunity when the duties were raised on account of the shortage. It was evident that Continental crops were too short for there to be any danger of a disastrous flooding of our market and the price could only fall by a very few shillings—which would have been in the interests of everyone. The Board, at practically no cost to its growers, could have made a magnificent gesture to the consumers by welcoming the lifting of the duties in the public interest. The sacrifice of a few pounds would have bought goodwill worth millions. Yet they opposed the lifting of the duties in every possible way. But perhaps this is yet another illustration of the dangers of producer-controlled organisations in which the Chairman and Board only exist on the sufferance of the annual general meeting. Remembering the disgraceful scenes at the Milk Board's meeting last May, when the playboys of dairydom behaved in a manner that would have shamed the inmates of a reformatory for juveniles, the Board's reluctance to take a longer view than they did may be understandable.

L. F. EASTERBROOK

THE MOST POPULAR ANIMAL

"I SUPPOSE," says Professor Julian Huxley in his introduction to *Songs of Wild Birds*,* "that birds give more pleasure and interest to humanity or at least give pleasure and interest to more human beings, than any other group of the animal kingdom—perhaps, more than all the other groups of the animal kingdom taken together." That is probably true if we leave out the domesticated animals. If Professor Huxley includes domesticated animals in his generalisation, however, I should be inclined to doubt whether—in this part of the world, at least—birds have given more human beings pleasure than cats. It is true that most of us do not love cats as a "group." If we love birds we love almost any bird. On the other hand, we may be devoted to one particular cat, and feel no affection at all for the other monsters of his species that come to challenge him to combat among our flower-beds. We love cats as individuals: we love birds as a rule as a species. Our cat is not merely a cat: he is Moth or Peter; but a willow-wren is only a willow-wren. Thus our attachment to a cat is permanent like our attachment to a human being. He enables us to enjoy the pleasure of individual affection. In spite of his never-ending declarations of independence, he flatters our possessive instinct. A bird seldom does this unless he actually builds his nest in our garden, and even then he is usually conscious of no bonds that unite him to us, not only through the joys of midsummer, but through the dark days of winter. The very blue-tits whom we have royally provided with coconuts come and go at their fancy. Possibly, it was this irritating faithlessness of the birds that first led men to put them into cages. A goldfinch outside a cage was not to be trusted.

Because of this untrustworthiness, it seems to me, the sentiment that unites a human being to a bird is less profound than the sentiment that unites him to a cat. And when I think of all the pleasure human beings get from their kittens at play and from the purrings of their cats, I wonder whether this does not exceed in volume the pleasure they derive from watching and listening to birds. The dog-lover would raise a similar question about dogs, and the horse-lover about horses. Who can measure the happiness that the cat, the dog, and the horse have bestowed on the human race?

And yet, if we turn to the poets for evidence on the matter, we must admit that Professor Huxley is right. In the modern world at least there has been more poetry written about birds than about cats, dogs and horses all put together. In presence

* *Songs of Wild Birds*. By E. M. Nicholson and Ludwig Koch. Witherby. 15s.

of a bird the poet is in a trance of happiness: in presence of a cat, he seldom loses himself in an ecstasy. Like Gray, he remains humorously critical—proof that his pleasure is not of the supreme sort. Keats could not have written an ode to a cat in phrases as passionate as those he addressed to the nightingale. Perhaps it is the cat's voice that makes such ecstatic celebration difficult. Shelley, again, however much he might have loved dogs, could never have hailed a dog in images so lovely as those in which he hailed a skylark. I conclude from this that there is a prosaic element in our love of cats and dogs. They give us what might be called fireside pleasures, whereas the birds give us the pleasures of an Earthly Paradise.

I am sure, none the less, that there are more people who love cats and dogs than people who love birds. If people loved birds as the poets have loved them, the ordinary man would take more trouble to acquaint himself with their names and their songs. The ordinary man cannot, I am convinced, tell a martin from a swallow. He knows the robin, because the robin insists on being known; but, if a willow-wren were singing in your garden and you told him it was a green linnet, he would accept your statement without any sign of astonishment. A friend told me the other day that he had only just learned to distinguish between the song of a thrush and the song of a blackbird. He did this with the help of one of the gramophone records with which *Songs of Wild Birds* is "illustrated." I do not mean to infer from all this that the mass of human beings get no pleasure from the appearance and the songs of birds. One fine poet of our time has written beautifully of a bird's song that he heard, though he confesses that he did not know whether it was a thrush or a nightingale. I know from my own experience that it is possible to be ravished by the song of a bird even though one does not know the bird's name, or even very much wish to know the bird's name. As a city-dweller I knew comparatively few of the birds by sight or song—I mean that I could not identify them—till I was in my thirties.

Then came sudden conversion. I began to peer into hedges and trees and to pore over bird-books. I longed to know all the members of the family of the tits. I pricked my ears to distinguish between the songs of the garden-warbler and the blackcap. I counted the day on which I saw a black redstart a red-letter day. The rumour of a kingfisher's presence in the neighbourhood would keep me questing for days. I would drive as far to see a Dartford warbler as to see Fountains Abbey. And so, despite the bequest of constitutions, it remains. When I was in Canada this year, the prospect of seeing a humming-bird excited me more than the prospect of seeing the Rocky Mountains, and I rose before six in the morning to see one. I am still largely an ignoramus about birds, but I have not lapsed from my conversion. The convert to bird-watching seldom lapses.

Yet his path is strewn with difficulties. Birds seem deliberately to hide from him: unless he has a great deal of spare time, or someone to guide him, it may be years before he is able to see a wood-wren's throat vibrating with song. The bird-books themselves are not always helpful. Lord Kennet, in his delightful book, *A Bird in the Bush*, complains that he has never read a book about birds which gave a description of their songs that would enable the reader to identify them. I have happier memories of bird-books than that, but, even so, until the gramophone was invented, it was not possible to tell an ignorant man what a bird's song sounded like in the same degree as it was possible to tell him what the bird looked like. The new convert to ornithology will find little in the books to enable him to distinguish between a blackcap and a garden-warbler by ear alone.

In *Songs of Wild Birds*, the authors, Mr. E. M. Nicholson and Mr. Ludwig Koch, have devised a new method of training the ear to identify bird-songs. They have enclosed their book in a box and accompanied it with two gramophone records reproducing the songs of several of the birds, including the nightingale and the hedge-sparrow or (as they call it, alas!) the dunnock. There have, of course, been gramophone records of bird-song before, but none, I think, so good as these, or used for the same purpose as "illustrations" to a book. This kind of book, I imagine, is the bird-book of the future. It is only a beginning, but we can now look forward confidently to the production of a bird-book, containing a text as good as Coward's beautiful coloured plates, and perfect reproductions of the songs of all the British birds on gramophone records. All that will be needed in addition will be a map showing the localities where, say, nightingales and Dartford warblers are to be found. But that map, I fancy, will never be made, or, if it is, it will be privately printed for distribution among approved ornithologists sworn to secrecy.

Even the selection of gramophone records, however, will present some difficulties, since some birds sing differently in different regions. The chaffinch, for example, is said to sing with a different accent in Worcestershire and in Donegal, and "the Rev. E. Peake considers that Berkshire chaffinches have more of a burr in the early part of their song than those in the Craven districts of Yorkshire, while in Huntingdonshire, on the fen side, the ending is always dropped." This complicates matters. In order not to offend local feeling we shall have to have records of chaffinches singing with a broad Yorkshire accent, dropping their aitches in London, introducing "z" sounds in Somerset, and so forth. The wren probably trills its "r's" more in Scotland than in Sussex, and there may be a touch of the brogue in the caw of an Irish rook. I confess that this theory that the birds, like ourselves, have their local dialects gives me great pleasure. It suggests that the bird-lover has before him a world of infinite possibilities of new discoveries. Meanwhile, the initiate discoverer will find *Songs of Wild Birds* a very admirable book with which to set out on his quest.

Y. Y.

PUBLIC MISCHIEF

AT a time when Parliament is attempting to regulate political activities by statute, the attention of the Legislature might well also be directed towards defining and restricting a common law offence, which within the last four years has been revived by the courts and which now seems likely to become one of the standard charges brought against political offenders.

The danger of this resuscitated misdemeanour of "effecting a public mischief" is the subject of a vigorous article in a recent number of the *Law Journal*.

After reviewing the 1932 case on which the modern doctrine of "public mischief" is based, the author remarks:

> Until that decision was given we regarded it as axiomatic that criminal charges must be precise; that an accused person should know exactly, not merely what acts he was alleged to have committed, but what offence they are alleged to constitute. . . . But "effecting a public mischief"; could vaguer words be found in the whole English language? . . . Ideas on the subject are as various as humanity, and it is not too far a cry to imagine that in times of political stress or national urgency the mere expression of unpopular opinions might be distorted into "effecting a public mischief." The danger of this charge being twisted to cover political crimes is a real one . . .

As a distinct offence public mischief begins to appear in the law reports about the time of Charles II. Sir Charles Sideley, who celebrated the departure of the Puritans in a novel fashion, was in effect fined for a public mischief when he (as the report in law French puts it) "encounter le peace del Roy et al grand scandal de Cristianity—montre son nude corps in un Balcony in Covent Garden al grand multitute de people."

The actual words "public mischief" first appear some three or four years later in the indictment of certain London brewers, accused of conspiring together "to impoverish the excise men" by suddenly cutting off the supply of small beer and encouraging the public to think that the shortage was due to Government taxation.

Between that date and 1932, when the law as it now stands was reaffirmed and established, there have been recorded some nine or ten indictments for public mischief. Though the

principle was early established that " all acts and attempts as tend to prejudice the community are indictable," in fact until 1932 the only crimes touched by it, excluding the early cases of " open lewdness grossly scandalous," were those where the charge was closely associated with criminal conspiracy.

In 1932, however, one Elizabeth Manley, who had told the police that she had been robbed with violence when in fact she had not been, was indicted and convicted of public mischief. " Taking the times," said Sir Ernest Wild, the Recorder, " —you must consider the times in which we live—such an act may distinctly tend to public mischief . . ." The Court of Criminal Appeal upheld the decision.

However, it was still not realised how wide was the principle established. In last year's edition of the leading textbook on criminal law " public mischief " is dismissed in a line or so, and is treated solely as the offence of wasting the time of the police.

But this year the case of two men, Lease and Whitehead, charged with printing attacks upon the Jews, and convicted not only of seditious libel, but of public mischief as well, shows that the principle cannot be so restricted.

Their case has established a precedent for the general application of a legal theory which most closely resembles the German National Socialist " Law of Analogies." After considering the public mischief cases one legal text-book thus sums up the position :

> Acts deemed to be injurious to the public have in some instances been held to be misdemeanours because it appeared to the Court before which they were tried that there was an analogy between such acts and other acts which had been held to be misdemeanours, although such first-mentioned acts were not forbidden by any express law and although no precedent exactly applied to them.

So far as political cases are concerned it would be hard to imagine a more dangerous legal theory. BARRISTER

CHEQUERS v. BERCHTESGADEN

[Hitler . . . is a most remarkable personality, one of the greatest I have ever met in the whole of my life.—Mr. Lloyd George in the *Daily Telegraph*, September 22.]

If Mr. Baldwin by some change,
Becoming not quite mad but strange,
Amid historic scenery,
Announced his mission to derange
The Government machinery,

Exalted race-course gangs to power,
Consigned the Primate to the Tower,
Decreed Law's abolition,
And made both Houses cringe and cower,
And gunned the Opposition,

Shaw, Cecil, Webb and Wells outlawed,
Beheaded Chamberlain for fraud,
Clubbed Ramsay, seeking shelter,
Sir Samuel Hoare and Lady Maud
Shot down and left to welter,

Vowed to exterminate the Gaels,
Wrote up their crimes in folk-way tales
As perils to the nation,
And planned to sterilise the males
On trifling provocation,

Made peace-talk with war-purpose blend
And kept the whole world guessing,
Would rulers, fearful to offend,
Their fondly-loved relations send
To bribe him for a blessing ?

And would Lloyd George on fire to scan
The architect of this great plan
Seek Baldwin's mystic area,
And hail in Bucks his superman
Instead of in Bavaria ? SAGITTARIUS

Correspondence

THE PUBLIC ORDER BILL

SIR,—I agree with some of the criticisms upon this Bill which Mr. Pritt has made in his learned and interesting article, but I disagree with others ; and I think that he is too apprehensive of the possible danger to the liberty of the subject which may result from its provisions.

I agree with Mr. Pritt's view that Section 2 Subsection 4 of the Bill is dangerous. That subsection runs as follows :

> In any criminal or civil proceedings under this section proof of things done or words written, spoken or published (whether or not in the presence of any party to the proceedings) by persons appearing to be members or adherents of an association shall, unless it is proved that those persons were not members or adherents thereof, be admissible as evidence of the purposes for which, or the manner in which, members or adherents of the association (whether those persons or others) were organised, or trained, or equipped

It may well be, as Mr. Pritt says, that the things done or the words spoken may have been done or spoken by persons who have become members of the association for the purpose of bringing discredit upon it, so that their acts or words may be no real evidence of the purposes of the association. I also agree with Mr. Pritt that if Section 2 Subsection 3 means that the Attorney General can make an *ex parte* application to the Court for an order to prevent the disposition of its property by an association contravening the section, it is objectionable. On the other hand, if opportunity is given to the association to prove that it is an innocent association, this criticism loses much of its force. I think that the clause should be amended so as to make it clear that such an opportunity will be given. I am inclined also to agree with Mr. Pritt that the power given by Section 6 to a constable to arrest a person whom he suspects of giving a false name and address or of intending to abscond is excessive. I think that the suspicion ought to be a reasonable one.

On the other hand Mr. Pritt has made several criticisms with which I do not agree. I do not think that the prohibition (Section 2 subsection 1*b*) of associations organised or equipped in such a manner as to " arouse reasonable apprehension " that they are organised or equipped for the purpose of " enabling them to be employed for the use or display of physical force in promoting any political object " is objectionable. It only applies to these associations a test similar to that which is applied to test the legality of public meetings. I think too that the provisions of Section 3 which give larger powers to the police to prescribe the route taken by a procession, and to prohibit processions in any particular area, are probably necessary in the circumstances. Mr. Pritt objects that there is no provision by which the legitimacy of orders made by the police under this section can be questioned in the courts. "The courts," he says, "are excluded and the executive is supreme." That is no doubt true ; but may it not be said that if the danger of serious breaches of the peace is real it is necessary to give the police a wide discretion ? I think that the fact that the prohibition of processions in a particular area is dependent upon the assent of the council of the area—upon the assent, that is, of an elected and representative body—is a safeguard that that power will not be abused. With reference to this power Mr. Pritt says that its effect may be that if the Government is embarrassed by public indignation felt for some of its actions " some high officer of police may quite convincingly be alarmed, and within a day or two the populace will not even be allowed to demonstrate." But surely this is exaggerated ; for though processions may be prohibited the right of public meeting remains intact.

I think that the Bill is an able attempt to deal with a difficult situation ; and that if it is amended in one or two respects, it will have the effect of diminishing the disorders which are a menace to the free discussion of political questions, without unduly curtailing the liberty of the subject. I think that the importance of maintaining freedom of discussion is really an answer to Mr. Pritt's criticism that the Bill will unduly curtail the subject's liberty. Erskine in 1792, in his defence of Thomas Paine, used some words about the importance of the freedom of the press which have very considerable bearing upon the importance of maintaining freedom of discussion. He said :

> No legal argument can shake the freedom of the press in my sense of it, if I am supported in my doctrines concerning the great unalienable right of the people to reform or change their governments. It is because the liberty of the press resolves itself into this great issue,

that it has been in every country the last liberty which subjects have been able to wrest from power. Other liberties are held *under* Government, but the liberty of opinion keeps governments themselves in due subjection to their duties.

But governments cannot be criticised intelligently unless freedom of discussion is possible. It follows therefore that if it is not possible to secure this freedom without giving larger powers to the executive, we ought not to hesitate to give those powers. It may well be that if, by insisting too meticulously on the control of the courts, we make liberty of discussion less secure, we shall, while grasping too tenaciously at a shadow of liberty, loose its substance.

W. S. HOLDSWORTH

SIR,—I am directed by my Executive Committee to inform your readers that on Saturday afternoon, December 5th, at 2.30, at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, the National Council for Civil Liberties will hold an all-in delegate conference on the subject of the Public Order Bill. This conference will be representative of all shades of political and religious opinion.

A large number of invitations are now being sent out to Trade Unions, Trades Councils, Co-operative Societies, Peace Societies, Churches and Chapels, etc., but as time is short, and as our lists may not include all the Societies which would be interested in the subject of the conference, we shall be glad if Societies which have not yet received a formal invitation will apply to us for further particulars of the conference.

RONALD KIDD,
Secretary.

The National Council for Civil Liberties,
99a Charing Cross Road, London, W.C.2.

MEDICAL UNITS IN SPAIN

SIR,—With reference to Mr. Beaton's most interesting article "Long Live Death," published in your last issue, readers of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION do not perhaps know that the British Red Cross Society and the International Red Cross have refused to acknowledge the status of the Medical Aid units sent out from England and now operating in Spain. This is not a mere formality, since it means that the doctors, nurses and ambulance men cannot claim immunity under international law, and are, accordingly, liable to be treated as combatants.

What happens to combatants who fall into the hands of General Franco's troops is well known. The Medical Aid Committee has even been told that its units are not entitled to use the Red Cross symbol—although it is true that Dean Inge's remark about a red cross to an Italian being the modern equivalent of a red rag to a bull can also be applied to Franco's forces. Even a *Daily Mail* correspondent, Mr. Garratt, has testified to the deliberate and repeated bombing of hospitals by the insurgent troops (see facsimile of his signed statement in the Spanish Government's Memorandum on German and Italian Intervention in Spain, obtainable at the Spanish Embassy in London).

Some readers of Mr. Beaton's article may not perhaps know that in addition to the Scottish Red Cross for which he appeals there are other Committees already in existence which need assistance from all who wish to lessen the horrors of the civil war. For Londoners there are the Central Committee for Spanish Medical Aid, 24 New Oxford Street, W.C.1, and the Holborn and West Central Committee for Spanish Medical Aid at 6 Gordon Square, W.C.1. There are also, I believe, Committees working in Birmingham, Cambridge and other provincial centres whose addresses are no doubt obtainable at 24 New Oxford Street, W.C.1.

FREDA UTLEY

68 Jessel House,
Judd Street, W.C.1.

CLOTHING FOR SPAIN

SIR,—May we draw the attention of your readers to the work of the Spanish Women's Committee for Help to Spain? This Committee, which consists of a group of Spanish women resident in London and a few English friends, is raising a fund for the sending of warm clothes to Spain. The oncoming of winter has added greatly to the hardships, and there is an urgent need for sweaters, scarves and other woollen goods.

In order to enlarge the field of their efforts the Committee is giving a matinee concert at the Scala Theatre on Saturday, December 5th. His Excellency the Spanish Ambassador and a number of eminent people in this country have given their patronage to this function, and the programme will consist of Spanish music, songs and dances characteristic of the rich local and national culture of the country which is to-day so gravely threatened.

We hope that all who can will come to the concert, and that many who cannot will send us donations.

R. MEREDITH, Secretary
ELENA DE ALONSO
CARMEN T. DE COSSIO

Spanish Women's Committee for Help to Spain,
12 Great Ormond Street, London, W.C.1.

NEW FABIAN RESEARCH BUREAU

SIR,—We, the undersigned, would like to draw the attention of your readers to the work of what we believe to be a very valuable organisation, the New Fabian Research Bureau.

Social progress in a highly developed civilisation demands that a great deal of solid research work should be carried out before the main lines of social policy can be correctly laid down. The primary aim of the New Fabian Research Bureau is to carry out this research work. Its function is not to present a policy of its own but to discover and systematise the facts which must be taken into consideration if effort is not to be wasted in striving after impossible or undesirable ends.

So far, N.F.R.B. has published over thirty research pamphlets and five books in the five years of its existence. It has through them achieved a reputation for reliability and a high standard of work. Besides these, it has completed numerous memoranda for private or special circulation, and has rendered assistance to its members, to the Labour Movement, to local authorities and progressive bodies which is valued highly. It has also organised numerous conferences in connection with its work, and issues a quarterly journal. More than this, it has collected around itself a number of experts in various subjects whose advice is always available.

We should be grateful if you would allow us through the medium of your columns to recommend this organisation to your readers. Research cannot, of its nature, be self-supporting; it must be financed by private subscription. At the moment N.F.R.B. is prevented by lack of finance from undertaking a good deal of necessary and valuable research. It will be found, we are sure, that membership of N.F.R.B. will repay the comparatively small annual subscriptions—10*s.* 6*d.* to 2 guineas—in the interest which it provides, apart from the very great social value of its research work. Further particulars can be obtained from the General Secretary, 37 Great James Street, London, W.C.1. The signatories are all members of N.F.R.B.

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FRANCIS WILLIAMS
LEONARD WOOLF

New Fabian Research Bureau,
37 Great James Street,
London, W.C.1.

ANDRÉ'S WIDOW

SIR,—People in this country have been shocked at the execution of Edgar André in Hamburg last week. His widow has experienced the most terrible mental and physical suffering. She herself was imprisoned and beaten, but, in spite of ill-health, since her release a few months ago she has worked untiringly to rouse public opinion to save her husband's life. During all this time she, like so many other political refugees, has been entirely dependent on what financial help her friends could give her. There has been a suggestion made that a number of people would like to express their sympathy with her by making a donation for her assistance. We cannot now save her husband, but we can save her from the additional suffering of financial worries.

Our Committee is in touch with her, and any one wishing to express such sympathy with her can be assured that any donations they send to the address below will be immediately forwarded to her.

ISABEL BROWN,
Honorary Secretary

Relief Committee for Victims of Fascism,
1 Litchfield Street, W.C.2.

O.T.C.s

SIR,—The Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard regrets the O.T.C.

At a school which voted at least 80 per cent. pacifist in the Peace Ballot the O.T.C. is compulsory.

If Canon Sheppard could hear the patriotic war-songs with which these budding warriors affix their puttees two minutes before parade, could hear their passionate eulogies of the sergeants, could read their poetry inspired by the prospect of a field-day, and could see the pride with which they " blanco " their equipment, he would let well alone.

While the O.T.C. flourishes pacifism will never die.

May pacifism always avoid the mistake the other side has made —the sacrifice of humour on the altar of zeal! N. S. P.

Worcester College, Oxford.

THE B.B.C. INQUIRY

SIR,—Your note in last week's issue of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION misses two important points. First, Mr. Norman is not just " a governor of the B.B.C."—he is the Chairman of the Governors of the B.B.C. The difference is not unimportant if questions of administration or pressure upon members of the staff of the B.B.C. be under discussion. Second, Sir Stephen Tallents' memorandum, as read in Court and printed in the better newspapers, contained the operative words " I was instructed. . . . " The Controller of Public Relations of the B.B.C. could not be instructed from below: therefore he was instructed from above. That narrows the issue, and whoever did instruct him, ought not the public to know what are the relationships between the Governors of the B.B.C. and its administrators?

London, N.W.3. H. L. BEALES

Miscellany

ARMS—AND THE MEN

" THE Adjutant-General of the Army," states my paper, " drew attention at a meeting at the War Office yesterday to the grave falling-off in recruiting." It is not easy to imagine an audience to whose attention it was necessary to draw this deplorable phenomenon. Presumably they were happy souls to whom the voices of Mr. Duff Cooper, Lord Rothermere, Lady Houston and Colonel Blimp have not yet penetrated. The rest of us know by now that the army has shrunk to five men and a corporal, all of them of a hopelessly outmoded pattern and many of them unseaworthy. The Adjutant-General, however, has been at some pains to analyse the reasons for this position. One of them, apparently, is the deplorable low physical standard of prospective recruits. In 1935, 68,000 men presented themselves for examination, and 31,000 or 47 per cent. were rejected as unfit. " The problem of recruitment," we read, " would therefore be solved if the physical standard of the nation were raised. But this is a somewhat slow process." True, batches of prospective recruits who were given a special diet and a course of physical training showed satisfactory increases in chest measurements and weight. But this, again, is " an expensive way of getting recruits." And even Mr. Duff Cooper announces that he cannot definitely *promise* that butter instead of margarine shall be added to the manifold attractions of army life.

But is the War Office dismayed, reader? Does it therefore settle down to await this desirable raising of the physical standard of the nation? Does it go along to the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Labour and say: " Look here, we're sorry, but no self-respecting cannon would eat the people we're getting as recruits. You'll have to fatten them up, old man, if they're going to be any good to us "? No; that would be a somewhat slow process or a somewhat expensive one, and this is at once a time of National Emergency and National Economy. Moreover the Minister of Health has forestalled any foolishness of this kind. When it was pointed out to him in the House of Commons that this little recruiting difficulty might be connected with a low standard of nutrition amongst the poorer classes, Sir Kingsley Wood hastened to explain that as a nation we are physically in the front rank. Malnutrition is practically non-existent. So we pay our money and we have our choice. The desirable standard of nutrition clearly depends upon the duties to be fulfilled. The 47 per cent. may not be fit enough to bear arms, but they are plenty good enough to stand outside a Labour Exchange.

Besides, why should the Ministry of Health bother itself? The technique of the War Office is simpler, quick and economical. " From December 1st," we read, " less rigid physical standards will be required. There will be four physical categories. Category A will consist of the most fit, who will be sent to the fighting units. The less fit, with flat feet, bad teeth, and so on, will be posted to units employed on more sedentary duties." Could anything speak more plainly of the Unflinching Will which is being shown in this matter?—of the Dogged Perseverance with which Every Obstacle is Being Overcome, in the Noblest British Tradition? Our Grand Old Country, unable to produce more than 53 per cent. of fit citizens, swallows her pride and stretches the Procrustean Bed of her Army to accommodate the flat feet and bad teeth in " more sedentary duties." We may now expect at any moment a sermon from one of our more militant bishops on the text, " Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed and the halt and the blind. Compel them to come in that my house may be filled."

The last obstacle will have been removed to transferring the Unemployed *en bloc* into the fighting services. Join the Army, one may say, and see the world. And if you're too ill-nourished to stand the journey, or too short-sighted to enjoy it, we'll find you a " more sedentary occupation." One is irresistibly reminded of Captain Anson's famous expedition. He, too, was " below establishment." The sagacious parties to whom he appealed for reinforcements sent him six hundred invalid Chelsea Pensioners. He buried two on his first day at sea and the rest before his triumphant return. Perhaps life on board the *Centurion* was *too* sedentary. But what would you? The method of recruitment was neither " somewhat slow " nor " expensive." It even saved the country money in pensions. The official military mind is clearly not much affected by the passage of a mere couple of hundred years.

It is interesting to speculate on the possibilities of these " more sedentary occupations." The most sedentary occupation which the Army provides, one would imagine, is to sit in a padded leather chair at the War Office and fulminate at the lack of fighting spirit of the young men of to-day. But for this, flat feet and bad teeth are less useful qualifications than a thick hide and influential connections.

A more accommodating spirit towards physical unfitness, however, is not the only way in which our National Safety is being fortified. Our Fishers of Men are now dangling a variety of brightly coloured lures before their somewhat reluctant fish. Recently, a certain recruiting centre issued an invitation to recruits to give the Army " a fortnight's trial "—entirely free, as in all the best demonstrations, of obligation. Only one youth accepted. He was entertained at the Sergeants' Mess. He did not actually join the Army. In the meantime he had found a job. But he apparently had " a wonderful time." Now, as soon as he tires of being just an ordinary workman he will be able to join the Army properly. Doubtless the Sergeants' Mess of his station will give him a rousing welcome. Again, the Director of Recruiting has gone out of his way to remove " the popular misconception that a soldier receives less than a man on the dole." A soldier, he points out, " gets three good meals a day, is housed in well-lit and well-ventilated rooms and provided with a clean bed and bedding. Baths are available at convenient hours. Medical and dental treatment are free . . . " and so on for three-quarters of a column. The Director of Recruiting makes his point. For assuredly no man on the dole gets these things. Why should he? One cannot expect butter, or even margarine, on the bread of idleness. Let him join the Army and then, if he happens to be a bit underweight, we have the official word for it that the bread shall be margarined, or even possibly buttered, to fill out the creases in the King's Uniform.

And yet, despite it all, the thing goes slowly. Mr. Duff Cooper's army is still below establishment, whilst Mr. Ernest Brown's is still far above it; and men from Jarrow who might march to Aldershot only march to London. It is all very puzzling. The Adjutant-General blames the shortage of fit men. The Director of Recruiting believes that the apparently poor pay, the difficulty of finding employment on leaving the Army, and the dislike of soldiering abroad for long periods are responsible. But, for our part, we agree with the noble lord who feels that "there is some definite influence at work which is hindering recruiting." The influence, we suggest, is another popular misconception—that armies lead to war and that war is undesirable. But the noble lord need not worry. Great-hearted men are working day and night to remove that misconception too.

SHOVEL

"THE INTELLIGENT MAN'S ROYAL ACADEMY"

THE day after its annual exhibition opened at the New Burlington Galleries, Burlington Gardens, the London Group was proclaimed, in one of the daily papers, as "The Intelligent Man's Royal Academy." Whether the intelligence belonged to the painters of the group, or to the crowds which may be supposed to throng its halls, is still obscure. It is pathetically clear, however, that both artists and lookers-on, in spite of being perhaps better informed than those at Burlington House Summer Exhibitions, are less wealthy, less numerous and less Royal. The importance of being well-informed, unlike that of these other conditions, can be overestimated. There are, after all, so many kinds of information available. Who is to say that Mr. Ceri Richards' reports of the modern Spaniard have any less or more value than Mr. Frampton's of the Nineteenth-century classicists; both are sedulous. Still, these are extreme cases, and doubtless when the smoke has cleared and the future of painting has become more assured, it will be seen that atrocities have been committed with enthusiasm on both sides of Burlington Gardens. At first sight the painters' acquaintance with contemporary European models makes the London Group pictures seem at least more palatable than the others. The intelligent man can detect in his academy who has been studying what vogue and when. He will find both the imported and the native brands of crassness well represented, but his greatest complaint will be against its incompleteness. An Academy without Mr. Sickert, Mr. John, Mr. Grant, Mr. Matthew Smith or Mrs. Bell, without Mr. Dobson, Mr. Moore or Mr. Tomlin, leaves him with little even to be disappointed about. And he may reflect that a mixed exhibition, even were it French, would lose much of its attraction when so stripped of its plums.

Since Picasso's march on Paris and the early days of fauvism, the emphasis in public exhibitions of modern art has been on expression (self-expression if you like it) rather than on mere statement. The great artists have drawn attention to their own personalities in their mannerisms; the rest, with a few polite exceptions, have taken to shouting in the language of the hoardings. As the London Group in 1936 contains no great artists and only a few polite ones, the chromatic uproar is tremendous. Large pictures by members punctuate the walls of the main rooms, hints of a rather timid Surrealism lurk in the corners. Here and there are perfervid reminders of Mr. Wolfe's visit to sunny Mexico and Mr. Blair Hughes-Stanton pulls Picasso's leg all over the end wall of the big room. The most distinguished exhibitor is Miss Ethel Walker, in full command of her brilliant acid style and disdaining any prettiness. The prettiest things here are the fragile hothouse, flowerlike pictures by Mr. Ivon Hitchens, who, like Miss Walker, is one of the few exhibitors to have evolved a personal mode. Mr. Moynihan's completely abstract works have the same beautiful *matière* they had last year. Miss Alison Debenham's portrait of a girl at a piano is a delightfully frilly affair. Mr. Rogers and Mr. Pasmore show how it is possible intelligently to learn from the French. Mr. Adrian Stokes, probably by Legros standards the least competent artist exhibiting, is showing one of the pleasantest landscapes, and Mr. Duplessis's little green world is as fresh as ever. Among the sculpture there is this year no genius work, but Lionel Leslie's hippo and Lady Daphne Hay's pekingese are charming, and Mr. Bedford's Flame Flower (which one has seen before) is a highly original work.

One might, if asked where the future of the London Group hung, very fairly reply, "in the dark." A result of the more than usually generous arrangement in the main rooms has been that seventy pictures (and among them some of the most promising work in the show) have been put in a cave, optimistically known as the "Long Gallery." Mr. Robert Russell, Mr. Adrian Kent, Mr. H. H. Newton, Miss Susan Palmer, Miss Norah McGuinness and Miss Nancy Sharp, not to mention others, deserve a better place than this. These people (unless they are too annoyed by such treatment to send in again), together with a dozen or so of those in the outer rooms, could make the London Group a better place to show in. But whether these more amiable painters send in again or not, even if they never come into power, it seems the best future for painting lies away from the forced intensity and the sterile hilarity of the last few years. I fancy that Mr. William Coldstream's rather unfashionable, almost McEvoyish, portrait may be, for all its faults, the best thing in this show. It represents a return to adult standards of painting, to the tradition of Degas. It is a lead for which not only the intelligent man's but also His Majesty's Academy might be grateful.

GRAHAM BELL

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Children's Hour," at the Gate Theatre

The Lord Chamberlain has licensed several plays (*Ten Minutes Alibi*, for instance) which deliberately excite public sympathy for murder. But he has refused to pass *The Children's Hour*, apparently because two of the characters are accused, falsely, of Sapphism. This practice, which is not even a misdemeanour, is evidently so much more horrible than a capital offence that the public must be saved from so much as hearing a reference to it. Among the wicked New Yorkers *The Children's Hour* had a prodigious success, and we are grateful to the Gate Theatre for giving us a chance to see it, admirably produced by Messrs. Norman Marshall and Reginald Beckwith. For this play, though it lacks all literary or permanent value, is a vehicle for really magnificent acting. The first two acts are entirely, hideously, convincing. We see a diabolical child ruining by her lies two young schoolmistresses. In the third act one of these declares that her feelings for her friend are in truth more than friendly, though she had never previously realised the fact. She then shoots herself, and the other, for no visible reason, refuses to marry the man she loves. The explanation of this hysterical behaviour is no doubt to be found in the ordeal of a slander action which they have lost, and of all the attendant American publicity. But this is not shown on the stage—we know, but alas we do not feel, that it has happened. And consequently the last act fails to convince. In any case the play is merely painful, because it lacks poetic imagination: we are harrowed but unpurged. The acting, however, is the best we have seen for years. Miss Mavis Edwards as the young fiend could not be more terrifying, Miss Pamela Standish is astonishing as the little girl she blackmails. Miss Mary Merrall has an easy, "fat" Old Lady part, which she plays with supreme competence. Miss Ursula Jeans gives an admirably quiet and sensitive performance as the gentler member of the suffering pair. And Miss Valerie Taylor, as the other, raises the play almost to tragedy. Her agonies and furies are appalling. In a sense the power of her performance bursts the limits of the play—this Clytemnestra, this White Devil, is too entirely compact of anguish and terror. But when she is acting, we feel that the story is not the fortuitous series of disasters which the text suggests, but an inevitable race to the abyss, precipitated by a clandestinely turbulent and catastrophic personality. She brings to the play, in fact, what it most gravely lacks, poetry and the sense of awe.

"As You Like It," at the Old Vic

If the dramatic critic were to imitate the habits of those musical critics who attend three concerts in an evening, one can imagine the notes which might be written after seeing Act One of *As You Like It*: "Charming eighteenth century setting. In the atmosphere of a country park the voices, the dresses, give a new elegance and a lighter echo to the scene. Old Adam bustles through the speech of his devotion; that was to be expected; the touch of a calm old age is not wanted in this picture. The wrestlers really throw one another on the grass below a balustrade, as though they had been taking lessons at the Ring; and this, again, with its mixture of rough sport and elegance, is given an eighteenth-century twist. But of course we know that the eighteenth-century has only been put there for the sake of Miss Edith Evans as Rosalind, and despite her acting she alas (this must be toned down) shocks us by appearing

arch, seasoned and, beside a much younger Celia, almost ugly." So one might reasonably have written at the end of half-an-hour at the Old Vic. The rest of the performance reverses this verdict. By some magic of acting (or was she badly made up at the beginning?) Miss Evans turns out to be one of the best Rosalinds we have seen. In her little-boy-blue suit she is superb, and through all the scenes in the forest she shows a wit, a freshness and tenderness which even she has never surpassed. Not a trace of the pantomime boy, which usually stultifies the part, remains; Miss Evans acts with her voice (how appealingly!), her hands and legs, her whole body. It is an entrancing spectacle. The other players have a task to keep up to her; and it is to their credit that they do not look awkward whenever she comes on the stage. Orlando (Michael Redgrave) and Celia (Eileen Peel) prove adequate companions. Jaques (James Dale), despite an occasional lisp, makes a less moony and more sympathetic impression than usual, though even Mr. Dale could not palm off the sententiousness of "All the world's a stage." The rest of the cast cannot be mentioned by name, but they all did well. Whatever, in general, has been sacrificed to polite convention is more than repaid by the excellence of Miss Evans' performance.

"Libelled Lady," at the Empire

Spencer Tracy is perhaps the expert's favourite film actor, after Groucho Marx; William Powell is everybody's film favourite; and Myrna Loy has the pleasantest face on the screen. With the glittery Miss Harlow they make a slick and amusing quartet. As a team it's good, but not by any means perfect; and the same can be said of this film, which has been acclaimed as "much better than *My Man Godfrey*" and as the M.-G.-M. equivalent of an Aldwych farce. Clearly it cannot really be both these things, and we may safely assert that it is neither. Long ago we compared the comic techniques of Frank Morgan and Ralph Lynn, as displayed in two decidedly mediocre films, one American the other British; and our conclusion is still that they are very much the same. But Morgan's acting—particularly that trick of voluble forced jollity cut short, contradicted, and resumed, in which his comedy mostly consists—was better than ever in *The Great Ziegfeld;* it was, in fact, so good that William Powell, who acted with him in that picture, cannot improve on it in this. And there was really no reason why he should try—except, perhaps, to amuse his friends with a close and clever imitation. Towards the end of this brisk slapstick comedy it became almost embarassing—because Mr. Powell is a perfectly accomplished actor on his own. *Libelled Lady* is a newspaper story, and a story of a biter getting bit; and, instead of presenting us with the usual spiky triangle, it gives us the awkward and just as eternal quartet. For "newspaper" read scandal-sheet; for "biter" read outsmarted crook; for the love interest substitute Hollywood's whole pack of wisecracks, complications, shady business and noisy divorce: that'll give you a fair idea of the picture. Then when you see it, as you surely will, you are likely to enjoy it—eight-tenths of it—far more than if anyone had led you to believe that, with all its stars, it was half as witty or as well made as *My Man Godfrey*. *Libelled Lady* has pace, which is the cardinal virtue of all such films; but at intervals that pace flags and is revived more often by slapstick than with wit. One slapstick sequence—the urban Mr. Powell floundering in a trout-stream—is brilliant, and Tracy's gruff cynicism is as pleasing as Powell's suavity. But somewhere there's grit in the wheels: they rattle, at varying speeds, like farce, missing the sweet even spin of comedy.

The Storran Gallery

The Storran—just opposite Harrods—is a young gallery which is making a reputation as a gallery which maintains a standard. So far, at any rate, it has shown surprisingly few collections of bad pictures. It is adventurous, but it is serious. It was just the place for Joan Souter-Robertson to make her début. For several years Joan Souter-Robertson has been known to amateurs as a sensitive and intelligent paintress, who possessed the none too common quality of painting frankly like a woman. Hers assuredly is the feminine touch. She has done well to wait before launching on a one woman show, for the difference between what she is doing now and what she did only a few years ago—compare *Froxfield* with a couple of dry and schematic flower-pieces—is vast and vastly encouraging. Obviously she is extremely sensitive and has a charming and personal reaction to what she sees. Her difficulty is to put it down in paint; but at that she will get better as she grows older. At present she seems most at her ease, and most happily stimulated, when she is painting children. In *The Girl With Coloured Eggs*, for instance, or *Little Red Fishes*, she has contrived to render the intensity of childish preoccupation and make it rhyme perfectly with a childish movement. This is a feat more accomplished painters might envy. But, then, such things are achieved, not by accomplishment, but by feeling—by being an artist in fact. And an artist—a feminine and inexperienced artist—is what Joan Souter-Robertson is.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, November 20th—
Elisabeth Schumann, Queen's Hall, 8.30.
SATURDAY, November 21st—
"The Boy David," King's Theatre, Edinburgh.
SUNDAY, November 22nd—
Mrs. Mary Agnes Hamilton on "Toleration," Conway Hall, 11.
Film Society Performance, "The New Gulliver," New Gallery, 2.30.
MONDAY, November 23rd—
Child Psychology. Alec Rodger on "Talents and Temperaments," Carnegie House, 117 Piccadilly, 3.15.
"The Road to Life," Everyman Cinema.
Institute of Psycho-Analysis. Miss Barbara Low on "Resistance to Leisure," Caxton Hall, 8.30
TUESDAY, November 24th—
Sir Norman Angell on "The Case *for* Collective Security," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
W. Horsfall Carter on "Spain," Morley College, 8.
WEDNESDAY, November 25th—
E. H. Dobby on "Agrarian Problems in Spain," King's College, 5.30.
National Council for Civil Liberties. Miss Rebecca West, Professor Haldane, A. P. Herbert and others on "The Libel Laws," Essex Hall, Essex Street, 8.
"Panic," Mercury Theatre.
THURSDAY, November 26th—
G. M. Boumphrey on "Housing," Morley College, 7.30.
Peace Meeting. Speeches by Canon S. D. Morris and Dr. A. Salter, Prince of Wales Road Baths, Camden Town, 8.
Prof. Lancelot Hogben on "Human Survivals and Social Institutions," Friends Hall, Euston Road, 8.30.
"Hell for Leather," Phoenix Theatre.
SATURDAY, November 28th—
The "Frogs" of Aristophanes, Chiswick Empire Theatre (matinée).

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

ENERGY *is eternal delight*, wrote Blake. And what untiring energy living things possess! The swifts race screaming through the sky without resting all through a summer's day—I have had swifts keep pace with me when I was flying an aeroplane—and the trout, with its head upstream, hovers for week after week and month after month, holding its own against the mountain torrent. And there are men who seem as untiring as the swift on the wing or the trout hanging motionless amidst the roaring spate. A costermonger selling whelks or jellied eels, a girl still dancing after dawn has broken, an old French peasant woman still hoeing her turnips after the sun has set, such figures are fountains of energy. But the man with most creative energy that I remember was D. H. Lawrence, whom I knew well between 1912 and the spring of 1915. His creative powers were perhaps then at their greatest, though they can never have slackened very much. A reference to the list of his works shows that he wrote thirty volumes or so in about eighteen years, besides travelling all over the world and living an astonishingly full life. When I knew him Lawrence would write perfectly happily while he was cooking a meal with several idle people sky-larking in the same room. Sitting curiously hunched up on a stool with his head a bit on one side he would scratch away in a foreign exercise book, dipping a bad pen in a penny bottle of ink, pause to scratch his head with the penholder, scratch down another sentence, rise and squint at the spaghetti, and subside to scratch more sentences on to the paper until we stopped his work with questions, or with affectionate horseplay, or until he called us to eat the meal that he had cooked. In those days his writing was an occupation that filled all the corners of his spare time but which was never allowed to interfere with his seeing fresh people, or with all-day excursions to gather plants for my herbarium. No doubt it was not always so, but that it should have ever been is astonishing to me, for I have never known another writer who could work under anything like such conditions. What Lawrence had to say poured out of him, and if he did not get it right the first time he repeated himself like a thrush singing, until the point was hammered in. I do not think he found it at all easy to go over what he had written, or to remould and reshape his work. If it just had to be done, no doubt he would do it, for he was never a shirker, but I believe he would always have found it much easier to write a new version. For the most part, I have the impression that he was satisfied with the first draft. He was an artist and a poet, but he could not grind away the corners to achieve perfection. Moreover, I believe it was always a relief to him to stop being an artist, switch off all self-criticism, and become the prophet. For what a prophet writes never has to be scrapped; the darker and more dogmatic it is the better many people will like it.

* * *

A volume of Lawrence's essays, travel sketches, reviews of books, etc., many of which have never been printed before, and running to over eight hundred pages, has just been published under the title *Phoenix* (Heinemann, 21*s*.). It has inevitably a resemblance to the family rag-basket, for just as there are shreds in that which provide vivid reminders of all the frocks the daughters of the family have worn in the last twenty years, so *Phoenix* provides samples of Lawrence's development as a writer, as an artist and as a thinker, at all stages of his life. My own preference is so strongly for the early Lawrence whom I knew, that my judgments will no doubt seem prejudiced to many of his admirers. It is true that there is no firm dividing line in Lawrence's life: that he began writing awful unreadable stuff like that about the lion and the unicorn fighting for the crown, published in Murry's booklets called *The Signature*, quite early, and that he wrote lovely stories quite at the end of his life. But there was a sort of turning point marked by his growing a beard. In the days before the beard, Lawrence was always eager, alive, sometimes petulant and scolding, but then laughing and ragging himself and his own petulance. The beard marked a willingness to surrender himself to the prophet; he concealed himself in the beard and lost the will to mock at himself and to criticise himself. Not that it was all his fault—he was shamefully treated during and after the war—the worms turned on him and he grew a bit savage. A lot of the prophetic writing is like the snarling of a dog that has been chained up and tormented. And he took the war personally, not as the suffering of millions of men, but as though it had been aimed, somehow, particularly at him.

* * *

It is therefore with delight that one opens *Phoenix* on the *Whistling of Birds*, which was published in the spring after the war, in the *Athenaeum*, then edited by Murry, under the pseudonym Grantorto. The artist and the preacher in Lawrence are blended in poetic harmony in this lovely little sermon, which tells how, on the first sign of thaw, the doves began to coo and the blackbirds to whistle.

> Surely the call is premature while the clods are still frozen and the ground is littered with the remains of wings! Yet we have no choice. In the bottoms of impenetrable blackthorn, each evening and morning now, out flickers a whistling of birds. Where does it come from, the song? After so long a cruelty, how can they make it up so quickly? But it bubbles through them, they are like little well-heads, little fountain-heads whence the spring trickles and bubbles forth. It is not of their own doing. In their throats the new life distils itself into sound. It is the rising of silvery sap of a new summer, gurgling itself forth.

And after the sermon cleansing one's heart of the suffering of the war, are two lovely reminiscences of two pets with which the Lawrence children tormented their mother. *Adolph* was a wild tiny rabbit that their father brought home to them, and Lawrence has caught the rabbit-soul with intuitive understanding. While he was writing these pages, he became a rabbit himself, and explains from the inside the contradiction of the rabbit's terror and his jaunty, insulting defiance. And in the next sketch he gives an equally good portrait of a puppy. In Part II, *Peoples, Countries, Races*, there are delightful impressions of Lawrence's first visit to Germany: of a French barber in Metz, of a hailstorm in the Rhineland and of wayside Christs in the Tirol, which he described also in one of the sketches in the volume *Love Among the Haystacks* and then of Indians drumming and dancing, and of the Nottingham mining countryside.

* * *

In Part III, *Love and Sex*, there isn't very much matter that is new to us. Indeed, one of the essays, *Women are so Cocksure*, which Mr. E. D. McDonald tells us is unpublished, I believe I have seen somewhere, in print. The excellent essay on *Pornography and Obscenity* is reprinted here. The weakness of Lawrence's intuitive, dogmatic moralisings is well illustrated in *Making Love to Music*, an essay on modern dancing. If the couples in the ballroom had been Mexicans or Indians how he would have worshipped just what he denounces here. Lawrence didn't dance himself. Most of these essays on *Love and Sex*, which will be read as a great revelation of truth, are just Primitive Methodist stuff that would go down equally well at a Revival meeting. Part IV, *Literature and Art*, is more interesting (to me at all events): a mix-up of prefaces to his own and other people's books and reviews, some really good and some only saucy, but all of them worth reading and full of the lively mockery of his mind. The long study of Thomas Hardy I haven't read. There is an attack on Galsworthy and a swipe, in a bad temper, at Cunninghame Graham and Van Vechten's *Nigger Heaven* is wiped out for ever. In an introduction to a Bibliography of his own books by Mr. McDonald he says: "I have never read one of my own published works." The awful thing is that this piece of swank was really true, and the reason was that Lawrence was running away from himself all his life. The artist did not want to have to face that he had only daubed in his masterpieces. No doubt the tubercle

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germ must be held responsible. But one wonders what Lawrence would have been like without the germ burning him up faster than ordinary men. Could he have plodded patiently and worked in cold blood without the fever? But how well he hits things off in sentences. Shestov's style with all the conjunctions clipped out of it is "like a man with no buttons on his clothes." Part V is a long essay on *Education of the People* which I could not get on with at all. Part VI, *Ethics, Psychology, Philosophy*, is mostly the sort of stuff I dislike. For example, two unfinished essays about the Duc de Lauzun, "who belongs to the fag-end of the French brocade period," whose faults he attributes to reading Restif de la Bretonne when he was a boy—ten years or so before Restif wrote anything, and twenty years before *Les Contemporaines*, Part VII has a fragment of a novel which starts horribly with a lot of falsity about an old country house and an ancient family and then bursts into passages of lyrical beauty—Lawrence at his very best—describing the fish following the boat on which the sick man is sailing home. And there is an unfinished fragment of a novel about the future which starts like Hudson's *A Crystal Age*. *Phoenix* is a most important addition to the collection of Lawrence's writings, and has been admirably edited by Mr. McDonald. But Messrs. Heinemann have committed a most unpardonable fault in making the book half an inch taller than the uniformly bound edition of *The Letters*, which is itself half an inch taller than the edition of the *Tales of D. H. Lawrence*. The three books look disgusting side by side. Since Heinemann's committed exactly the same fault in the collected edition of George Moore, it is time someone told them to take a little more trouble over their books, which are not always of a quality to justify self-complacency. Lawrence's indifference to the appearance of a book does not extend to all his readers.

DAVID GARNETT

G. K. C.

Autobiography. By G. K. CHESTERTON. *Hutchinson.* 10*s.* 6*d.*
A Chesterton Omnibus. Three Famous Novels. *Methuen.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

I had got rather bored with G. K. C.; not with his ideas, but with the bother of sorting out his ideas from his jokes. His style often degenerated into a mere trick. I can imagine him saying: "I have never been tight. By this I do not mean—God forbid—that I have never been drunk, but that my thoughts, like my clothes, are loose, rambling affairs that allowed plenty of room for expansion, and that if my logic and my body both suffered a little from the gross fallacy of the undistributed middle, that is better than being tidy, finished, and buttoned up against the gorgeousness of growth." This kind of thing—a poor imitation of G. K. C.—rests on a pun, but the pun rams home a point. My irritation with G. K. C.'s later essays was due to the labour of working out which were the puns and which were the points.

In his *Autobiography*, nearly all the puns and paradoxes, as people call them, really say something of importance, and there are long stretches of the book which are just brilliant writing, unspoilt by verbal jugglery. The chapters on his childhood took him, I should think, immense pains to write, and they are the most permanently valuable part of the book. He has a splendid passage on the realism of pretending in childhood. He describes his early enjoyment in any small, fairy, or doll-like world, and there is an illuminating paragraph in which he explains what is called his optimism by saying that he has always been intensely conscious of the magical quality of people locked up in their little boxes of brick and mortar just as he used to be as a child playing with toy actors on a toy stage.

He explains *Napoleon of Notting Hill* by this love of the miniature stage. About the mysterious *Man Who Was Thursday* he makes interesting remarks, but frankly leaves the mystery unsolved. His uproarious appreciation of unusual characters who seemed ordinary and who were capable of extraordinary things—which Chesterton would say was true of most people—is illuminated by his account of his close friendship with Belloc and Bentley. Bentley he describes as a frock-coated individual who would suddenly climb a lamp-post in order to light a cigarette. And he solves the mystery of the game of Gype, about which he and his friends wrote solemn articles to the press, and which was supposed to be sweeping England. The point about this game was that it was never invented. H. G. Wells helped to start this joke; Henry James, he suggests, would not have appreciated it. It is an unusual feature of this *Autobiography* that it includes candid, amusing and truthful things about half the great men of Chesterton's generation, and yet never a word that is likely to hurt anybody's feelings. Chesterton explains that he always held unorthodox or cranky opinions, but disliked the cranks even more than the ideas they attacked. Thus he was an anti-vivisectionist, but even more an anti-anti-vivisectionist. He was a pro-Boer, and also an anti-pro-Boer; that is, he was not a pacifist, but a person who wanted the Boers to win because he thought that it was a good thing that people who were defending their country should beat bullies. He has a characteristic passage about his attitude to the last war. He disagrees with H. G. Wells equally because he called the war "a war to end war" and because he complained afterwards that the war had been "like a forest fire" which had "settled nothing."

> It is hard to say which of the two statements is the more absurd. It settled exactly what it set out to settle. To tell a soldier defending his country that it is The War That Will End War is exactly like telling a workman, naturally rather reluctant to do his day's work, that it is The Work That Will End Work. We never promised to put a final end to all war or all work or all worry. We only said that we were bound to endure something very bad because the alternative was something worse. In short, we said what every man on the defensive has to say. Mr. Brown is attacked by a burglar and manages to save his life and property. It is absurd to turn round on him and say: "After all, what has come out of the battle in the back-garden? It is the same old Septimus Brown, the same face, the same trousers, the same temper a little uncertain at breakfast, and the same taste for telling the anecdote about the bookmaker at Brighton." It is absurd to complain that Mr. Brown has not been turned into a Greek god merely by being bashed on the head by a burglar. He had a right to defend himself: he had a right to save himself; and what he saved was himself, so far no better and no worse. If he had gone out to purify the world by shooting all possible burglars, it would not have been a defensive war. And it would not have been a defensible one.

The end of this chapter about the war is superb. He wanted the Allies to win, because he thought the Germans the aggressors and their dominance intolerable. But he hated British imperialism and the graft and profiteering that accompanied war.

> . . . new noblemen continued to spring into life from somewhat commercial soils; there were any number of flourishing economic ventures, supported by forceful publicity and magnetic personality; and all the powers of the scientific mergers and newspaper combines, that now rule the State, rose slowly into their present power and peace. As the Ancient Mariner remarked, in a moment of melancholy comparison:
>
> The many men so beautiful
> And they all dead did lie;
> And a thousand thousand slimy things
> Lived on; and so did I.

In his early Socialist days G. K. C. realised that amongst all the innumerable societies for improving the world which he addressed, there was a fundamental weakness. They were in revolt against things as they are; they were demanding that the ideals of Christianity should be applied to this or that institution, but since they rejected the metaphysics of the Christian Church, often held doctrines culled from biology or elsewhere that were antipathetic to Christian ethics and had no alternative philosophy, their minds were a riotous and sentimental confusion. Chesterton, himself unable to rest without some solid philosophy, solved the problem by becoming a Roman Catholic. To me this seems a bad solution, but the problem of the lack of any popularly understood and clearly stated alternative philosophy for behaving like a Christian remains. I agree with the thesis which underlies the whole of this book, that society must crumple up before paganism, if the beliefs in tolerance, in individual happiness and development, in human goodness, and indeed, if you like, in the brotherhood of man, remain mere conventional aspirations, assumed to be good because nobody has even challenged them. In that case they topple over before the first blow of the new pagan who revives the old doctrine that might is right and that the ordinary man is the natural slave of the hero in shining armour.

I have one serious quarrel with Chesterton. I think he further confused the controversy about rationalism and mysticism. He could always score by discovering plenty of irrationality among the rationalists. But there really is a difference between believing things which are based on evidence, and believing things merely

because it is convenient or rather fun to believe in them. The opening chapter, called "Hearsay Evidence," opens with an admirable hit at his critics:

> Bowing down in blind credulity, as is my custom, before mere authority and the tradition of the elders, superstitiously swallowing a story I could not test at the time by experiment of private judgment, I am firmly of opinion that I was born on the 29th of May, 1874, on Campden Hill, Kensington . . .

Excellent. But it does not make the slightest difference to the fact that one is only justified in accepting hearsay evidence if one could in fact go and check it up in the registry office or a laboratory, and that one is not justified in believing unverifiable assertions about the nature of the Deity, or for that matter, about a race of green spotted cows that live on the planet Saturn and talk Spanish.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

THE CASE FOR THE DEFENCE

The Headmaster Speaks. *Kegan Paul. 7s. 6d.*

Headmasters are not appointed for their literary skill. They are expected to have the administrative gifts of a Cromwell or a Lyautey, the moral fervour of a Wilberforce or a Shaftesbury, and the genius for publicity of a Selfridge or a Beaverbrook. It would be too much to expect them also to write like Gibbon or Voltaire. One man, moreover, may be able to write both sensibly and brilliantly about education, and yet be an insensitive, incompetent practitioner, while another may be an inspired Head, but have a pen which drips with unending platitudes. It would therefore be very rash to base on the contributions to this book any opinion on the professional abilities of the authors.

If Public School education is often a tragedy or a farce, the Headmaster is rarely its villain or its buffoon. He is usually more open-minded than many of his assistants, than most of his Governors and Influential Old Boys. Mr. Hugh Lyon, of Rugby, describes feelingly the temptations to which a headmaster is exposed.

> Our reported pronouncements are usually delivered in the nebulous and complacent atmosphere of Prizegivings and Speech Days. And parents are more biddable than the meekest of shareholders. . . . So it is that the headmaster finds little incentive from outside to indulge in salutary hard thought about his aims and ideals. Still less is he urged to do so inside his little kingdom, where he is exposed to the insidious daily corruption of being the dictator of all actions, the judge of all disputes, in all controversy the final court of appeal. Endlessly occupied as he is with a succession of particular problems, most of them of no intrinsic importance, he is constantly in danger of judging hastily, or by rote, or impatiently, under pressure from an insistent member of his staff, some case which has for at least one individual issues incalculably far-reaching.

In the days of the "great" headmasters, this lonely grandeur often encouraged a grotesquely dictatorial habit of mind. (The famous Thring of Uppingham always thought that those who disagreed with him were the enemies of Jehovah.) But their epigonous successors fall more often to a different temptation. They see both sides to every question, they become over-inclined to compromise, they let sleeping dogs lie, and are too cautious—or too busy—to push through in the teeth of opposition reforms which in theory they approve, and which, after their retirement, they vehemently recommend. It is far easier to blame them for this, than it would be, in their place, to act differently.

Here are twelve papers by headmasters, most of whom are neither arrogant nor reactionary. Mr. Ashcroft, of Fettes, it is true, considers that "the soul of Education is discipline." He deplores the reduction in punishments, he assures us that official school-games are more valuable than a wide choice of activities, he is appalled by pacifism, he declares that most British boys are deeply religious, he even believes that the average boy realises that caning hurts the master more than it hurts him. (A tiny, but significant, point is that he complains of the schoolboys' excessive admiration for Mr. T. S. Eliot, without himself having learnt even to spell the poet's name.) This article can be recommended to those with a taste for clean fun. Most of the other headmasters reveal themselves as sensible, though they hardly answer their opponents' case. But Mr. Roxburgh, of Stowe states very fairly the disadvantages of boarding-schools, though he personally believes that these are outweighed by the advantages.

> The impact of youthful opinion upon the growing mind at a boarding-school is dangerously strong and continuous. . . . Commonplace ideas and juvenile ideas are much too pervasive and much too compelling in the boarding-school.

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(He does not mention that these schools impose with awful severity that "taboo on tenderness" diagnosed by Dr. Suttie in his admirable *Origins of Love and Hate*. Perhaps the privation of natural affection is the most disastrous of all the Public School dangers.) Mr. Roxburgh also recommends for very good reasons that boys should leave their Public Schools earlier.

> Those who are to go to Oxford or Cambridge should be sent abroad or into works or into an office for a spell between school and university. Those who are to go into commerce should also have an interval, spent in travelling if possible, and the desire of the least enlightened employers to secure them at seventeen should be resolutely resisted.

(Very wise. And what of the employers who successfully secure boys of a different class at the age of fourteen?) The same paper insists on the necessity of the Public Schools co-operating with the national system of education, and receiving boys from the primary schools.

Mr. Christie, of Repton, writes principally on the importance of leavening the Public Schools with the spirit of Christianity. (And certainly in my own experience I have never come across any other place so utterly unaffected by Christian ideals as that of my Public School, where we had chapel every morning and prayers every evening.) Mr. Barton, of Bristol, makes perhaps the best impression of the lot. He writes uncomplacently and sensibly. His values are sound, and it is interesting and cheerful to find that he strongly defends the Board of Education and State control.

> I am sure that if at this moment a scheme of secondary education could be hatched *ab ovo* by an oligarchy of the best minds from Whitehall and the Inspectorate, it would be a scheme better balanced, and very much nearer to the realities of life, than the examination-ridden and congested affair of secondary schooling which has now deposited itself upon us by a process of accretion.

Most of the contributors condemn the curriculum imposed upon their schools by the School and Higher Certificate Examinations. The most obvious reform in secondary education to-day is that different training (and different tests) be applied according to whether a boy is going straight into a job or is continuing his education at a university. (There are, of course, cases which cannot be classified, boys who may or may not reach scholarship level, but these are a minority.) The Universities are entitled to impose their own tests, but it is urgent that the Board of Education should seek the collaboration of some representative body of employers in devising a new leaving examination—and a new curriculum—for boys not going to a University.

Most of these headmasters are agreed that at present too many subjects have to be learnt. The trouble, of course, is that human knowledge has immeasurably widened. I should say myself that English, logic, biology and history are the most necessary and fundamental subjects. Mr. Sloman, of Tonbridge, gaily calls for French, German and Latin as well, but is not the teaching of modern languages largely a waste of time? You can learn incomparably more French by living for six months in France than by studying it for six years at school.

Mr. Whatley, of Clifton, believes that the greatest need of education to-day is a larger supply of really well-educated schoolmasters. He further sums up the problem of current education in one question: "Can the schools have a simple and definite policy when the nation so obviously has not?" The crux, in fact, is a vicious circle. The parents of to-day are the products of the faulty education of yesterday, so are the employers, so are the schoolmasters, so are we all. Worse still, we know grotesquely little about education. We can all see glaring faults in the present system, and judged by its results it is enormously ineffective. We all have pet theories, but our practical ignorance remains almost complete. We argue passionately about co-education, punishments, boarding-schools, recreations and curricula. But almost all our arguments are based on emotion or narrow personal experience. What we desperately require, and cannot possibly now obtain, are scientific facts. Until some progress is made in applied psychology, and until some trustworthy comparison can be made of the results of different methods, most talk about education remains a mere method of personal self-expression. If the excellent and well-intentioned writers of this book could bring themselves to collaborate with the headmasters of an equal number of "progressive" schools in inviting an objective inquiry into results, there would be some hope for the improvement of education.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

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NEW NOVELS

Bread and Wine. By IGNAZIO SILONE. *Methuen.* 7s. 6d.

Weeping is for Women. By DONALD BARR CHIDSEY. *Faber and Faber.* 7s. 6d.

The Song of Friendship. By BERNHARD KELLERMANN. *Lane.* 8s. 6d.

The Song in the House. By ANN BRIDGE. *Chatto and Windus.* 7s. 6d.

The King Sees Red. By ANTHONY BERTRAM. *Chapman and Hall.* 7s. 6d.

It seems to need, nowadays, such strength and such talent before English writers can discover some reality behind the usual scene, that one wonders what on earth the novel can be coming to. What it may be coming to, of course, is politics—Mr. Bertram beckons—where it is already beginning to find a new and desperately needed fertilisation. Politics are penetrating everywhere, of necessity, and they will penetrate the English novel. But there is meanwhile. And there is the fact that the average English novelist is about the hardest thing you could find to penetrate between here and the Maginot Line. This week, for example, I attempted three or four large, sincere novels very similar in objective to Mr. Chidsey's brisk, excellently written drama of an American middle-class family. These volumes, all "competent," were all, finally, impossible to review. Reading them one came to feel that English, as employed by the ordinary novelist, has become so paralysed with stock words and phrases that it is practically meaningless. And when it is not meaningless it frequently has too many meanings. Here is an instance: "'. . . grape-fruit or cocktail?' Without reasoning about it, she took the crystal glass of mysteriously flashing liquid, and held it towards him." Now, when an average American novelist writes "cocktail" he means cocktail, and I believe him. Without a moment's hesitation I believe in his cocktail. I can see it. But I find, only too often, that when an average English novelist writes "cocktail," his eyes starting out of his head, I simply don't believe him, and I don't see it. What I do see, heaven help us all, is a wicked, winking, frosty little goblet brimful of magic, and I'm getting sick of the sight of it.

Fontamara, Signor Silone's earlier book, I have not yet read, but it is evident from this one novel that he is a writer of far more

than usual integrity and importance. The story, laid in Italy at the time of the recent invasion of Abyssinia, is that of Don Benedetto, a schoolmaster and priest, and his pupil, Pietro Spina, an agitator and fugitive. Himself disguised as a priest, Spina attempts to revive the political consciousness of the peasantry. As man of action, the disciple tries to carry out the programme denied to Don Benedetto by his years, and by his historical and philosophical position. Confined by illness to the most primitive of mountain villages, Spina, with his city communism, learned abroad, receives a series of shocks. There are the *cafoni* themselves; utterly impervious to ideas; the prey of facts alone. There is Christina, who represents goodness gone to seed, the Family and Religion. "Have you never thought of justice as an idea capable of being realised in this world, among men?" he asked. "Our kingdom is not of this world," Christina replied. The further the reader progresses the more he realises the import of a casual remark dropped by Don Benedetto towards the beginning. "The idea that in our modern age man can only be involved in dramas and not in tragedies is a piece of stupidity that we may leave to the newspaper critics." As their friends are slowly killed off, the personal tragedy of Spina, Don Benedetto and their minority, identifies itself with that of Italy, and with that of the world at bay, as indeed it is, against the cancer of Fascism.

Signor Silone may lack M. Malraux's pulverising conciseness and intensity, but he brings the Frenchman to mind. He is comparable. In a word, he comes near, here and there, to touching greatness. Such a description as I have given of *Bread and Wine* may suggest, however, that most of it is bony, melancholy reading. This is by no means true. There are many passages of quite exquisite comedy: the following is from a magnificent speech by the village lawyer, successfully urging a crowd of distracted yokels to join the army:

> "The death-ray can stop engines, bring trains running over the earth and ships furrowing the sea to a standstill, deflate bicycle tyres, dry up women's breasts, stop clocks and watches, make the birds of the air lose their plumage, the clappers of bells fall to earth, and turn the enemy soldiers into salt! No one will be able to oppose our victorious advance. The Man of Providence has announced it himself to all the world to-day. The hour of reckoning has come!"
> "To New York!" the whole crowd started shouting . . .

I cannot leave this novel without also quoting one of the last things Spina says before his end. It is his conclusion upon the Church:

> What a great revolution there is in the world when persons who possess such spiritual riches as you possess, almost as a natural gift, cease expending them upon religious symbolism and devote them to the collective life. Thus a new type of saint is born, a new type of martyr, a new type of man.

Bread and Wine, incidentally, has of course not been published in Italy.

Weeping is for Women is, technically, astonishing. I don't know, but I imagine it must be a *New Yorker* training in tautness which has enabled the author to produce a first novel in which the pace is so accurately controlled, in which each page does its part. What a relief this genial, adroit getting-on-with-it-ness is! A synopsis may make the story seem a little inadequate for a whole novel, but then this is none of your sagas. Miriam and George, parents, have been saving up all their lives for a world cruise. Their daughter, Edie, marries an adding machine, and just when they have gotten over that, their son, Warren, contracts a *liaison* with a married woman in such a way that, under American law, they have to pay the money for their trip to her husband. They bear up; the son goes to college, and that's that. Mr. Chidsey, being American, has not followed this up with twenty thousand words of stiff-upper-lipping, while the son, a gentleman after all, earns his parents' money back for them, but I can assure prospective readers that their seven-and-sixpence worth is there, anyway. It is a difficult book to give glimpses of, because it hangs together so well, but here are a few lines in which the author hits off something that one is tempted to hail as a new kind of vulgarity. Edie, just married, is haranguing her increasingly embarrassed parents:

> "If we have a boy and a girl we'll stop there. But if there are two girls then we'll have another baby two years from *that* time. I want them all to come in the late winter or early spring, so that I won't have hot weather when I'm very big, and when I give birth," etc. etc.

Weeping is for Women is not, perhaps, a very ambitious novel, and I don't think a vastly significant one. Nevertheless, the author has succeeded to perfection in doing what he desired.

With the remaining three it is perhaps unnecessary to go into quite such detail. *The Song of Friendship* is a very readable, broad-in-the-beam work about four soldiers who return to a burnt-out farm after the War. The farmer-owner and his three friends, a mason, a carpenter and a gardener respectively, spend the next years struggling to bring the property back to life, in which they at last succeed. Trouble about coinage made me doubt if the *mise-en-scène* was Bavaria or Austria, but it is almost certainly the latter. Herr Kellermann is undoubtedly familiar with the more harassing details of country life, and his characterisation is vivid and original. The quartette have an elderly woman, Babette, to look after them, and the description of her wedding-feast, during which she never ceases her appreciative roars—"You're a pack of rascals! Lord! What a wedding!"—at the same time holding on tight to her stomach lest she give birth there and then, could not, of its kind, be better. Babette is the antithesis of Mr. Chidsey's Edie. For those, to sum up, who like candid, well-built fiction, treating the land from a spanking, non-controversial, Breughelesque standpoint, Herr Kellermann will provide.

Miss Ann Bridge's collection of short stories are written with such care and ability that one wishes she would provide herself with more worthy, and possibly less eerie, material. There are three ghost stories. Well and good. But of the remaining eight too many depend upon some quite breath-taking stroke of chance. The schoolboy who happens to drown in the very same Burberry; the American lady who happens to find the maid whose dismissal she caused; the eminent doctor, called Philip, who happens to find Pepita's votive offering to St. Philip. It becomes too much, altogether. If literature should be stimulating, it should hardly make one feel as if one was constantly winning at roulette. In *Peking Picnic* the authoress devoted her talents to people: I feel that people still deserve them more than coincidence.

As I have suggested, Mr. Bertram has come to politics. Max, a young, handsome Ruritanian King, is converted to the Left and lodgings in Covent Garden: mainly, through high-flown conversations with equally handsome young persons in England, and with one still handsomer young Bolshevist of his own country—". . . his neck was a strong white column that recalled a neck he had looked down on in a London Underground . . ." He has unheard-of adventures everywhere, not the least among which is his battle against, curiously enough, Jewish Fascism in his own kingdom. Mr. Bertram, frankly, has made his hero oscillate between the sublime and the insupportable with such endearing gusto that it would be only too simple to poke fun. (The conversations, for one thing, are sometimes positively excruciating: "The marriage you suggest entirely honouring ~~me, I suppose~~. Good God. My bed and my crown to buy a thief to catch a thief . . . a noble situation"). However, the patent earnestness of the whole book precludes such a thing. And at all events, if *The King Sees Red* is not for the more crotchety highbrow, I can recommend no more welcome, and beneficial, Christmas present for that often snobbish, yet captivating toad, the British public schoolboy

BRIAN HOWARD

FOOTNOTE TO HISTORY

Politics from Inside, 1906-14. By SIR AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN. *Cassell.* 18s.

For the eight years covered by this volume Sir Austen wrote a continuous stream of letters to his step-mother in order that his father might be kept in touch with the inner essence of affairs. The result is a book as attractive as it is important. The self-portrait they paint is itself of high suggestiveness. No one could emerge from it without a profound liking for Sir Austen. It is not merely the moving relation he describes between himself and his father. It is also that he has, in the best sense, dignity, loyalty, a real power of self-abnegation. He is not, I think, a very imaginative man; his perspectives are narrow, and he is almost completely devoid of a sense of humour. But no one can read these pages without the sense that he has always worked for the right as he has seen it, that his devotion to duty has been intense and unremitting, and that he has cared for his principles with something akin to passion. His letters would be worth while if only for this intimate self-portrait of a man so long at the centre of affairs.

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great importance; and their picture of Toryism's relation to the events and institutions of those years is more important still. What, I think, emerges as their main impact is the self-sufficiency of the Tory mind. In all these years Sir Austen never seems to have had a conversation with a member of the Labour Party, at least of sufficient importance to recount; and he never had any contact, beyond public meetings, with any member of the working-classes. Neither he, nor any of his friends, seem ever to have been capable of seeing the Irish question from the Irish point of view. They think that tariff reform is a species of social reform which, combined with empire, will prove an adequate way of satisfying working-class aspirations; it is interesting to note that Sir Austen has no glimmering of the significance of the great strikes of 1911, for to him they were merely a threat to necessary social discipline. The constitutional crisis over the House of Lords is viewed above all as a technique through which, if he is capable of sufficient dexterity, Mr. Balfour may secure office for the Tory Party; what lay behind it, as an expression of the distribution of class forces, never even dawned upon him. Of great importance, too, is his account of the Curragh mutiny. It is, for him, a major blunder on the part of the Liberal cabinet. But its revelations, as he recounts them, of the intimate connections between the high officers concerned and the Tory chiefs, the significance of the influences these latter at once brought to bear upon the Palace, seem to have made no impression on his mind. He can see how dangerous it is for the allegiance of the army to the government to be in question; but the inference he draws from it is the interesting inference that this condition shows that the cabinet should have given way to Ulster. That such a surrender would have made the Army, and in its Tory context, the master of our politics, does not occur to him. In reality, it is part of the outlook Balfour once expressed when he told his hearers that in office or out of it affairs must be so arranged that the Tory party is always in charge of the destinies of this country.

There is a very important account here of Mr. Lloyd George's intrigues for a National Coalition in 1911; and it looks far uglier, as an essay in honesty, in Sir Austen's account than in its author's own memoirs. The discussions over the succession to the Tory leadership in 1911 are of superb interest; Sir Austen emerges from it with something like nobility of character. But I think the record makes Mr. Bonar Law an even more second-rate figure than we have previously supposed; and the portrait of Mr. Walter Long goes far to justify the famous poem of Mr. Chesterton.

Above all, the student of political psychology will find invaluable material here on the species *homo politicus*. On Sir Austen's showing, every Parliamentary debate in his period left the honours on the Tory side; that was not wholly the public's impression at the time. It is revealing, too, to notice how the politician assumes that his speeches are really public events; he hardly recognises the weight that history attaches to the play of impersonal forces. It is amusing, too, to realise how stray conversations become important when their burden supports the view the politician himself takes; desultory gossip seems with fantastic ease to assume the proportions of weighty evidence. And it is worth while noticing that, on March 18th, 1909, Sir Austen hears a speech (on the flight of capital) from Mr. Stanley Baldwin and thinks that "he should develop into a Front Bench man." That was good prophecy; and, so far as I know, it was also Mr. Baldwin's first appearance in the larger light of history. HAROLD J. LASKI

CHESHIRE CATS

Parody Party. By Various Authors. *Hutchinson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Parody Party consists of prose parodies of fourteen successful authors by fourteen equally distinguished people in a rude mood. The book, says the preface, "originated at a week-end party, and to mark the occasion each contribution introduces, in some form or other, a week-end." This may be the reason why this book is naughty. "L'expression 'week-end' en anglais a une signification péjorative." It has certainly influenced some of the material of these parodies. The expert parodist can write in his victim's manner about anything on earth. For preference he avoids the favourite subjects of the master. He reproduces the grin without the cat. Now some things connected with the English week-end are closely associated with certain writers. For instance, Mr. Huxley—after Peacock—claimed the garrulous house party for his own. Mr. Eliot had an option on the snickering footman, Mr. Maugham owns Bridge, and Mr. Wodehouse the hangover. It is unfortunate, if unintentional, that in the morning of Mr. E. C. Bentley's "Greedy Night" Lord Peter Wimsey and Bunter remind one so much of Bertie Wooster and Jeeves.

It is to be hoped that nobody is intimately acquainted with the writings of *all* the people parodied here. They are as follows: Charles Morgan, Hugh Walpole, J. B. Priestley, Aldous Huxley, Somerset Maugham, Dorothy Sayers, John Buchan, Stanley Baldwin, Sir James Barrie, Dr. Inge, A. G. Macdonell, Peter Fleming, Ernest Hemingway and a lot of Russians. Mr. Cyril Connolly has done a Huxley and called it "Told In Gath." To capture the Huxley manner it is necessary to write like an intelligent but slightly improper encyclopaedia. This is how Mr. Connolly does it. "It is this shortness of our Northern day that has occasioned the luxuriance of our literature. Retractile weather—erectile poetry." "Imperturbable, schizophrene, the portraits of Groynes and Rhomboids by Laurencin and the excise-man Rousseau looked down from the walls." Observe the miscellaneous learning, and the monumental elegance of style. There should perhaps have been more contempt for the body, more smells, and more awareness of advertisements; but one can't have everything.

Miss G. B. Stern has written a fragrant little play consisting mainly of stage directions called "The House That Likes to be Let Furnished." In the finest sense of the word it is whimsical. Mr. E. C. Bentley's plagiarism of Miss Dorothy Sayers has a crashing climax, an elegant atmosphere, and a natty lacquering of culture. There is a sufficiency of swear-words, and Lord Peter's slang has the correct period flavour. "Close Season in Polchester" by Mr. Francis Iles will convince those who have only read one of Mr. Hugh Walpole's books that they have read all of them. "Eden Week-end," by A. G. Macdonell, contains some fine Priestley philosophy: "Life, after all, is only a tragi-comedy, and who can blame Mr. Arnold for longing so desperately to play his part among the puppets of grease-pot and cold-cream, as well as among the puppets of reality that we almost all are?"

Mr. L. A. Pavey's "First Person Circular" is a rattling good story, and nobody should complain about the occasional slightly egotistical reflections which interrupt it. Miss Rose Macaulay is quite as elemental as Mr. Hemingway. "We came to a crowd, where a Ford V Eight had gotten an old woman, so we stopped to look, too. The old lady lay on the pavement, and all of her was a mess." Miss Rebecca West is as stylish and mystical as Mr. Charles Morgan at his best. "While his heart contracted in a spasm of fear lest this plan should have gone astray, he noticed that the waitress had not answered. She had taken refuge in one of those silences that are cloisters to the troubled spirits of women as Althea had often done, as Laura often did. But, of course, she was Althea, she was Laura."

Parody at its best is good criticism, and too little of it has been written in the last few years. This book should be put into the hands of the young as a cautionary guide to the modern novel. No intellectual snob can afford to be without it. Collectors should know that it is a rarity in that the blurb on the wrapper is not only literate but also witty. And Nicolas Bentley drew the pictures. FREDERICK LAWS

PACIS INTERFUIT

The Cambridge Ancient History: Volume XI: The Imperial Peace A.D. 70–192. *Cambridge Press* 35*s.*

I think I shall do best if I indicate what parts of this new volume are most likely to be of interest or value to readers who, like myself, do not bring sufficient knowledge of the subject with them to appreciate the more technical parts as they deserve. The two ethnological chapters, for example, on the European and Parthian background, are not really intelligible without the plates, which are to follow with Volume XII, and the same is true of the chapter on the art of the period. That on Roman Law I must take as read, and the three on Literature, Philosophy and Social Life are for the most part common form, though they do happen to contain one of the most remarkable ethical judgments I have ever read. Epictetus, with his usual good sense and straightforwardness, somewhere says:

> Behave in life as at a banquet: a dish comes to you—stretch out your hand and take a portion politely; it passes on—do not detain it; it has not yet reached you—do not anticipate it in desire.

on which the author of the chapter comments:

> However immoral this teaching may be, we cannot help admiring Epictetus for his earnestness.

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and a picture of the Fellows of Trinity fighting for the first cut off the turkey ought to be laid up for the instruction of posterity. It is to such incidental records, after all, that we owe the greater part of our knowledge of social customs under the Roman Empire. Might I also ask the editors, in the next volume, to exercise a stricter literary control over their translators, and not allow their pages to be starred with such horrors as "very consequent" and "the Roman Empire coins." That Antoninus "made punishable the exhibition of an Imperial statue as a provocation" I am very willing to believe. But I should like to know what it means first.

To the ordinary reader, I should say: begin with the Camden Professor's chapter on Rome and the Empire—forty pages of compact historical wisdom, animated by a deep, and discriminating, enthusiasm for his subject. I have read (or gone to sleep over) almost every volume of the Cambridge History A and M, and to match Professor Last's chapter I find myself going back to Maitland on the Elizabethan Settlement of Religion. What *was* the Roman Empire? The extension to the Ecumene of certain principles discovered by experience in the centuries during which Rome was moving towards the sovereignty of Italy; the need for authority, for *imperium*, somewhere; and the equal need to keep authority within those limits beyond which it will be resented. This is *libertas*. We have chosen another way; but we once heard the Roman doctrine, very earnestly and solemnly declared, not far from Westminster. "Sirs, I desire the liberty of the people as much as anybody. But, I must tell you that their liberty consists in having, of government, those laws by which their life and their goods may be most their own. It is not having a share in government, Sirs; that is nothing pertaining to them. But until you put the people in that liberty I say, they will never be happy."

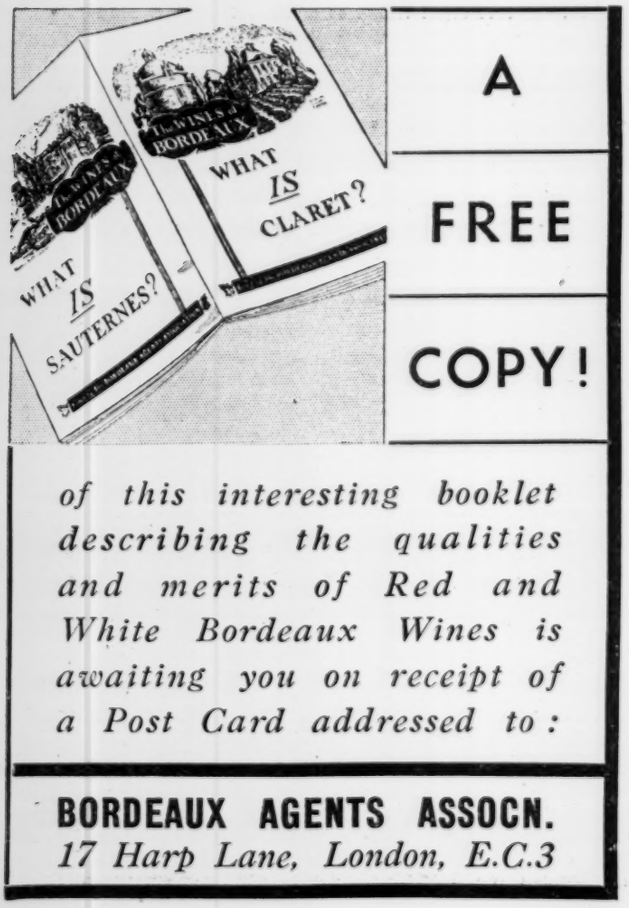
Now there can be no doubt whatever that for many generations after the establishment of the Principate, most of all in the hundred and twenty years after its refounding by Vespasian, "the lives and goods" of ordinary people from the Tyne to the Euphrates were "their own," as they had never been before. In this sense, therefore, the world was "happy." And, so long as the municipalities, cantons and cities retained the large measure of self-government which Rome encouraged them to exercise, as the Army, the Law, the Civil Service, were progressively opened to provincials, the price of this "immense majestic peace" was a light one. Here at last, it seemed, was a community in stable equilibrium, and the "aeternitas Populi Romani" placed beyond the assaults of time. But the whole experiment rested on two suppositions. One, that a defensible frontier could be found and maintained; the other, that the local units would keep their vitality. Professor Last lays his finger on what in the long run proved a fatal weakness in the Imperial system, the constant tendency of the municipalities to fall below the Palatine standard of efficiency, thus inviting and almost compelling the continual intervention of the Emperor. When Trajan believed himself to be dying, he whispered to his ablest marshal: "Take care of the provinces if anything happens to me," and taking care of the provinces meant a progress, by successive, insensible stages, from hegemony through paternalism to the administrative absolutism of the new Monarchy.

But in the Second Century the danger was only impending: the economic disasters which precipitated it were still a long way off, and both the thought and the feeling of the Ecumene as a whole were heartily on the side of the Imperial order. The reconstruction after the Year of the Four Emperors is admirably described by Professor Charlesworth and Mr. Syme, and their narrative is well sustained by Mr. Longden through the reign of Trajan, unhappily one of the worst recorded periods of Imperial history. But here we see the other fatal problem emerging. There are three areas of special pressure from without—the Rhine, the Danube, the Euphrates—and three was one too many. To reduce them to two by making an interlocking system of defence from the North Sea to the Black Sea was the policy initiated by the Flavians, carried forward by Trajan when he threw out the Dacian bastion, and almost achieved by Marcus Aurelius in the annexation of Bohemia, which he projected and his son refused to complete. Regarded as a European state, the Empire was dangerously narrow-waisted: from the Rhine to Marseilles, from the Danube to Malea is 600 miles: from Vienna to Aquileia is only 200. Here Central Europe comes too near the Mediterranean; here will be the line of fracture between East and West, the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches: and it is quite conceivable that if Marcus had lived another ten years the fracture would never have occurred. Parthia by herself could easily have been kept at arm's length; the waves of calamity rolling south and west from the great plains of Eastern Europe and Asia would have been stemmed and broken by the Roman *limes*: and the Mediterranean world would have developed as the unity which, thanks to the strength and wisdom of Rome, it now felt itself to be:

quod cuncti gens una sumus.

In this process of unification the culture, capacity and devouring activity of Hadrian counted perhaps for as much as any one factor we can assign. In Professor Weber of Berlin he finds a biographer whose acknowledged mastery of his subject is, at times, masked by a style which I should be sorry to call hectic, though I cannot think of anything else to call it. When he gets to Commodus one can almost hear the producer calling "Shoot!" Yet there is a great deal in that chapter worth thinking over. The muscular, brainless, sensual boy, without purpose or self-control, did fit his world, a world which was ceasing to be classical, and turning towards things—faith, exuberance, originality, release—which the classic temper discountenances. The Christians always had a kindly memory of the reign when they had lived in peace under the Imperial protection. And, indeed, it is impossible not to feel that a slight turn of Nature's wrist, when she was making this Spaniard, would have sent him into the world as a messenger of the New Word, and the Redeeming Blood. Born in the purple, Alec Durberville would have been rather like Commodus, and it was the Alec Durbervilles who gave the Early Church some of its most anxious hours.

In a particularly interesting chapter Dr. Streeter propounds Seven Reasons for being a Christian (they should be read with Gibbon's Five Causes): and first among them he places, as Harnack did, the sense of power and security against the forces of darkness, which the new faith gave its adherents. But, as history has shown again and again, the sense of spiritual power can be most dangerously misdirected; early in the second century a pamphlet was in circulation warning the faithful not to take St. Paul's doctrine of faith too literally. But what was the defence against the antinomianism which inevitably sprang up in a society charged with the conviction that it could do all things, through Christ the Strengthener? One feels at times, in turning over, for example, the wearying extravagances of Gnosticism, that it is touch and go; and that the chances are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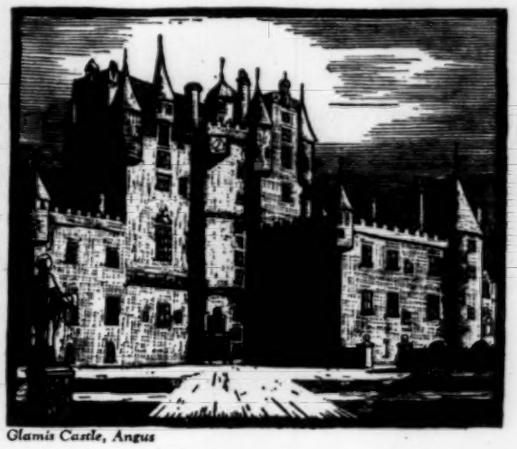

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MARTIN SECKER AND WARBURG

that Christ will fade into a cult-god, the Church be lost in some syncretistic mummery round the Holy Cake. What saved it from dissolution was the conception of Church organisation, of which Ignatius of Antioch was the great assertor; the *ecclesiae* kept their shape and vitality, while the *civitates* were sinking into apathy. But of even greater consequence was the fact that the Sacred Book, which the Church, being of Jewish origin, could not be without, contained a biography of the Founder. To the question, which all the world was asking: what shall we do to be saved; sects, philosophies, mysteries, might give their different answers. But to the further question: "and being saved, how are we to behave!"—the Church alone could reply: "behave like your Saviour." When all is considered, the reception of the Four Gospels into the canon of Scripture must be regarded, for its historical consequences, as the great and memorable event of the Imperial Peace.

G. M. YOUNG

DETECTION

A Puzzle for Fools. By PATRICK QUENTIN. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
Cards on the Table. By AGATHA CHRISTIE. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
Murder on the Tropic. By TODD DOWNING. *Methuen.* 7s. 6d.
Murder Gone to Earth. By JONATHAN STAGGE. *Michael Joseph.* 7s. 6d.
Mr. Pinkerton Has the Clue. By DAVID FROME. *Longmans.* 7s. 6d.
The Corpse with the Dirty Face. By R. A. J. WALLING. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 7s. 6d.
Deathblow Hill. By PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
The Uncounted Hour. By WARNER ALLEN. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.
The Guy Fawkes Murder. By EDWARD C. LESTER. *Long.* 7s. 6d.
The Poisoner's Mistake. By BELTON COBB. *Longmans.* 7s. 6d.
Murder May Pass Unpunished. By FRANCIS EVERTON. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
Murder Mars the Tour. By MARY FITT. *Ivor Nicholson and Watson.* 7s. 6d.

Every one of these twelve detective stories is readable, but the three plums on the list are *A Puzzle for Fools, Cards on the Table* and *Murder Gone to Earth.*

A Puzzle for Fools made a fool out of me, but that is not the reason for my recommendation. Mr. Patrick Quentin possesses all the qualities of detective writing for which I have long admired a Mr. Q. Patrick, the rattling pace of the story, the plain English in which it is told, and the keying up of excitement to concert pitch. But these two gentlemen are even more unanimous in their sensible attitude to their plots. We all know that the essential feature of a detective plot is its jig-saw construction; every part must fit eventually into place. But in the jig-saws so lavishly presented to us how often are we doomed to spend two-thirds of our precious time piecing together the sky, that monochrome sky? Messrs. Quentin and Patrick never allow their plots to dictate to the human interest; their characters live a life of their own and have the appearance of being involved *accidentally* in a detective story. How right they are to realise that a detective story is all the better for resembling Mae West—we know there must be a bony substructure, but we never want to see it! The subject of *A Puzzle for Fools* is murder in a sanatorium for not-quite-certifiable nervous diseases, kept by Dr. Lenz, an American psychiatrist. The hero-cum-detective is a patient who hears (on page 9) his own voice whispering softly, intimately: "There will be murder." And so there is—some very neat murder, with a dash of love interest thrown in; because the hero is deprived of the credit for the solution and has to get the girl as consolation prize. The solution surprised me as much as the hero, but my consolation for joining the fools is that I can at least recommend *A Puzzle for Fools* as the most brilliantly misleading story I have read this year.

Mr. Jonathan Stagge is also a writer who goes in for excitement in haste and detection at leisure. *Murder Gone to Earth* is determined to fray your nerves with horror. The naked, headless torso of a girl is used to stop a fox's earth. Hounds bay, rats in the barn nibble and gnaw, a fine horse is murdered, and someone lets the bull out. But for all this macabre behaviour there is a plausible explanation; the characters never degenerate into Grand Guignol puppets; and the criminal's behaviour throughout is so logical that his final conviction does not come to the reader as a surprise. Mr. Stagge is stated to be an old hand at murder stories writing under a new name, but in all my experience I have never read anything like *Murder Gone to Earth*, so I cannot make a guess at the author's identity.

Mr. P. Quentin may be Mr. Q. Patrick under another publisher, Mr. Stagge might be anybody bar Mr. Wills Crofts, but Mrs. Christie is forever Mrs. Christie. *Cards on the Table* is one of her inimitable chess problems. Four people play Contract Bridge while their host sits in a chair at the other end of the room. During the game all doors remain closed, but when the fourth rubber is interrupted the host is dead. Every person present had a perfect motive for murdering him; all had the opportunity at some time when they were dummy. Poirot and you are given the scores of all four rubbers; Poirot and you have to do the rest for yourselves. The only information Mrs. Christie does not impart is whether this time she has constructed a two-mover or a three-mover—and it is just there you may go wrong. But if you do join the lugubrious ranks of "incorrect solvers," you must blame yourself; Mrs. Christie remains impeccable, though not without cunning.

The minor prophets of crime can be dealt with briefly. *Murder on the Tropic* is not as good as Mr. Downing's *Vultures in the Sky*, although he employs the same Mexican setting. He recaptures the atmosphere of elusive excitement, but he cannot sustain it, as his criminal does not wear sufficient protection from our curiosity. The ingenious Mr. Walling caters for painstaking readers who enjoy working out time-tables. *The Corpse with the Dirty Face* will reward your activity with half sheets of notepaper, when Philip Tolefree countersigns your solution. *Deathblow Hill* marks an advance in the criminality of Miss Taylor's Cape Cod population and consequently in her own technique. I had become so accustomed to confining my suspicions to the actively unpleasant or negative members of that community when Asey Mayo was about, that Miss Taylor caught me napping this time. You must realise now that even endearing inhabitants of the peninsula may commit crimes provided they have the best of motives and are prepared to go mad afterwards. So watch out, girls! *The Guy Fawkes Murder* is another candidate for time-tables; but there is a short cut to the solution by spotting a clue. Mr. Lester concentrates on the mechanics of murder and gives one a long run of events, devoid of psychological complications.

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Mr. Pinkerton Has the Clue and *The Uncounted Hour* both draw the long bow beyond its legitimate limits, even in detective stories. Mr. Frome has been known to lapse into unscrupulousness before, but Mr. Warner Allen ought to have learnt better detective cricket from Mr. Bentley, with whom he collaborated earlier this year in *Trent's Own Case*. *The Uncounted Hour* would deserve the highest marks for its spirited style and the apparent impossibility of the crime if Mr. Allen had only been able to conceive some other means of surmounting that impossibility than a flight of fancy. Mr. Pinkerton goes to Bath for his murder and manages to solve it without any help from Inspector Bull—yet what a solution! He had better take Bull with him next time.

The Poisoner's Mistake is very quietly written, but the unexpected solution is all the more effective for that. At a New Year's party a young man proposes to a girl; less than five hours later he is dead of arsenic poisoning. It seems he picked up a drink that was mixed for someone else. Who was it meant for? Mr. Cobb is in his element describing an ordinary English family reacting to the knowledge that one member has just failed to poison some other member, but will probably try again. *Murder May Pass Unpunished* contains such a perfect murder that Mr. Everton cannot arrange for it to be solved. Instead, the criminal explains to the detectives how the crime was committed, and goes off scot free for lack of evidence. The result as a book is interesting rather than satisfactory. Readers tend to resent being thwarted for lack of evidence.

Murder Mars the Tour is more of a murder novel than a detective story. Miss Fitt is more interested in atmosphere than in crime, I should say. Certainly the lively picture of the discomforts of travelling abroad and the repulsiveness of one's companions on walking tours compensates for her half-hearted pursuit of the criminal. Miss Fitt might do wonders in collaboration with, say, the ingenious Mr. Walling.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

SHORTER NOTICES

Lancer at Large. By F. YEATS-BROWN. *Gollancz.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Yeats-Brown is a curious mixture of Kipling, Samuel Smiles and Old Moore. The ingredients do not mix easily either in the mind or in literature. There is evidence in this book that they have set up an uncomfortable conflict in the author's mind, and the conflict in the book is equally uncomfortable. He went to India in order to revisit it after many years and write articles about it. This book is presumably in part the result, and the title leads one to expect an account of India as it appears to a roaming ex-Bengal Lancer. When Mr. Yeats-Brown allows the Lancer to use his eyes and have his say, we have some good Kiplingesque pictures, the pilgrims at the Ganges, the blonde Madonna you meet in the dining car of an Indian train, the Kohistani who wanted to shake hands. Unfortunately Mr. Yeats-Brown or Samuel Smiles or Old Moore insists that the Lancer shall be anything but "at large"; they will keep breaking in. They break in with long homilies on morality, with semi-philosophical disquisitions, semi-scientific disquisitions, immense divagations on Yoga, on breathing and other exercises, on the question whether the alleged case of Little Jagadish and his car proves the truth of reincarnation. It is all a little "half-baked," to use a word much liked by an older generation of Anglo-Indians. It is also confused and confusing. The Lancer's ideal man, the Pathan with hair on his breast and a rifle in his hand, who lives for loot and killing, is really incompatible with Old Moore's ideal man, the saintly medicine-man or the Saddhu who by contemplation and the stopping of his breath reaches Nirvana. At one moment Mr. Yeats-Brown is trying to convince himself that the solution of his difficulties is to be sought in the soul, "the soul that rises with us, our life's star," at another that it all depends upon keeping the bowels active. The two prescriptions are not reconciled by his remark, for the truth of which there is no evidence, that "an open mind is dependent on an active bowel."

Delius as I Knew Him. By ERIC FENBY. *Bell.* 8s. 6d.

The curiously interesting and moving story of how Delius was able at the end of his life, though blind and paralysed, to present his last works to the world, has been known in a vague form to the public for some time. This book is the detailed story of a co-operation which must be unique in the history of music. By a system of trial and error, by determined application, and above all by the exercise of a fine musicianship, Mr. Fenby worked out a method of taking down to Delius' dictation. The story of how this method was arrived at is a fascinating one and Mr. Fenby tells it well—straightforwardly and with an admirable self-effacement, though he cannot wholly prevent us from realising how variously trying his task must have been. For Delius was by no means an easy man to get on with—how could he have been? Those who read Miss Clare Delius' book will notice how the self-centred, obstinate and opinionated traits in the elder Delius came out, in later life, in the son: the impatience, the demands made on others, the dislike of criticism. Mr. Fenby is sure enough of his master's greatness to be unafraid to show the darker side of the picture, even to the extent of quoting Delius' absurd opinions on other people's music; but also he does not fail to bring out the extraordinary fascination of the man, the strength of his inspiration and the spell his genius threw over all who knew him. Mr. Fenby is aware of the composer's faults, especially of the dramatic sickliness of much of his music; but this awareness only served to make him the more admirable a collaborator. The book is full of interesting glimpses of other people: the account of Philip Heseltine and his pathetic loneliness is particularly interesting. But it is as the account of an extraordinary *tour de force* that it has its main appeal.

Thomas Wright of Olney: An Autobiography. *Jenkins.* 15s.

In this discursive and entertaining autobiography, the biographer of Cowper, Blake, Fitzgerald, and John Payne has turned his attention to himself and his full and varied life as school-master, preacher, writer and founder of societies. When telling us of the inception and writing of his well-known biographies, Mr. Wright seizes the opportunity to reply to his critics, and as much of his work has excited a good deal of controversy, the book is lively reading. Only recently his biography of Dickens aroused anger in those who believe that only the virtues of the famous dead should be remembered. Mr. Wright, however, holds out for the truth, and as much of it as you can come by; and he is now able to supplement his story of Dickens and Miss Jernan the actress, with some recently acquired evidence that Dickens lived with this lady at Nunhead during the last few years of his life, and that at the Nunhead house much of *Edwin Drood* was written. Mr. Wright has many stories to tell, and conversations to report, of Watts-Dunton, Swinburne, John Payne, and others, who have helped or hindered him in his work, and reveals himself throughout as a bonny and cheerful fighter.

India and the World. By JAWAHARLAL NEHRU. *Allen and Unwin.* 5s.

Readers who lacked the leisure to undertake Jawaharlal Nehru's *Autobiography* may turn with relief to his slight volume of essays. The same personality meets us, calm, courteous, humane, yet brave to a fault and capable of plain, unsparing speech. The same political outlook finds expression, and once more this uncompromising Indian Nationalist reveals himself as a Socialist of the Left, who talks our language and thinks our thoughts. These papers cover a wide range. The book opens with the addresses delivered by Pundit Nehru as President of the Indian National Congress in 1929 and 1936. Both are living fragments of Indian history: the first is a preface to the most

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militant period of the national struggle, while the second prepares us for a new emphasis on social problems. Two essays reflect the experiences of a prisoner, and make their appeal for the reform of the reactionary system of punitive justice that is still the rule in India. Others are letters on history, written with a rare charm to the author's daughters. The rest discuss with plain-spoken courtesy the meaning of Imperialism, the attitude of the Labour Party to India and the achievements of Mr. Gandhi. The impression that Mr. Nehru conveys most sharply is of a recent deterioration in the conduct of the British authorities in India, a lapse towards arbitrary and even brutal behaviour. How many of us realise that in a single year (1932) over 500 persons were whipped for political offences? This is Hitler's technique.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

THE best orchestral recording this month is that of Bizet's *L'Arlesienne Suite No. I*, played by Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Symphony Orchestra (Col. LX541–2). One can see Sir Thomas' gestures as he conducts, such is the vigour and realism of this record. Bizet is a composer of whom, in spite of the strict limits of his genius, one never tires. This must surely be the best incidental music ever written, and the prelude suggests the drama with a completeness denied to most operatic overtures. I wish Sir Thomas would record Bizet's charming early *Symphony in C*, which was revived not long ago and pleased nearly everyone. More important musically, but less successful in recording, are Brahms' *Second Symphony in D*, played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Bruno Walter (H.M.V. DB2933–6), and Beethoven's *Eroica*, played by the same orchestra under Felix Weingartner (Col. LX532–7). I cannot see much excuse for another issue of the latter work so soon after Koussevitzky's splendid version; it would surely have been less wasteful to have given us the 6th or 8th Symphonies, a new recording of which we stand in greater need of at the moment. True, this is a superb performance, almost equal to the other. I have never heard the *fugato* in the Funeral March given with greater majesty, and the brass is wonderful throughout. But there is a good deal of echo, which is unpleasant, and the oboe tune in the last movement is drowned by the violins. In the Brahms *Symphony* the wood-wind, which in this orchestra are famous for the accuracy of their "attack," sound better than the strings, which are shrill and distorted. But the rendering is passionate and thus suited to this the most lyrical of the composer's symphonies. It was Hanslick's favourite and I am not sure he was not right—except when I hear the 4th, and then I am sure he wasn't! In any case there must be few musicians who have not a special tenderness for this lovely, autumnal work. One could wish, however, that the *andante* had been taken not quite so fast. Forbidding in prospect but not in actuality, three *concerti grossi* from Op. 6 by Handel receive an impeccable performance by the Boyd Neel String Orchestra (Decca X119–24). This remarkable ensemble has achieved a high reputation in a short time, and these records will do much to consolidate it. Compared with the Brandenburg *Concerti*, one notices the absence of the Italian element which is so conspicuous in the latter; instead, the Anglo-German solemnity is varied by the kind of austere gaiety so characteristic of Handel. *Concerti* Nos. I and III are particularly entrancing; while for one-record buyers I recommend the *Larghetto* from No. IV played on X124.

Chamber music is rather meagrely represented this month. Haydn's *String Quartet in C, Op.* 33, sillily named "The Bird," is a typical early work of its composer. It has a musical-box charm and the minuet is lovely; but the whole does not amount to much. The performance, by the Roth Quartet (Col. LX538–40), is excellent. Peter Warlock's *Capriol Suite* has achieved a certain popularity, but I cannot feel that this violin and piano reduction, admirably though it is played by Szigeti (Col. LB32), is as satisfactory as the original orchestral version. Schubert's *Wanderer Fantasy*, that favourite warhorse of all pianists, receives a technically sound performance in the hands of Sigfrid Grundeis (Parl. E11307–9). He is admirably sparing in use of the loud pedal, but unfortunately the reproduction is bad—metallic and dead in tone. It is a curious, interesting, somehow not quite satisfactory work, often reminiscent of Weber at not quite his best; but the fascination it undoubtedly exercises will make people want to possess these records, in spite of their faults.

Elisabeth Schumann is the perfect singer for the gramophone: the simplicity of tone and mastery of phrasing that make her so wonderful a *Lieder*-singer, are peculiarly well suited to reproduction. This month she gives an exquisite performance of three of Schubert's most poetical songs—"*Auf dem Wassen zu singen*," "*Der Jüngling an der Quelle*," and "*Geheimes*" (H.M.V. DA1521). It is impossible to imagine a better interpretation of these little masterpieces. Reconstructed jewels continue to be made from Caruso's pre-electric recordings; this time it is the famous "*O Paradiso*" from Meyerbeer's *L'Africana*, and a Neapolitan song, *Santa Lucia* (H.M.V. DB2991). There is (unavoidably, one supposes) a great deal of surface scratch when the orchestra is playing alone; but the voice reproduction is most remarkable. The aria is very good Meyerbeer. The Decca company have just issued a set of excerpts from *Lohengrin*, *Siegfried* and *Die Walküre*, made at last year's Bayreuth Festival. They include the love-duet from Act 2 of *Die Walküre*, and that from Act III of *Lohengrin*, sung by Maria Müller and Franz Völker; and the *Waldweben* from Act II of *Siegfried*, sung by Max Lorenz. Taking into account the difficulties of recordings taken "during performance," these records seem to me decidedly good. The singing is very fine indeed, and the orchestral playing, though a little distant and woolly at moments, is well balanced. The *Lohengrin* excerpt is particularly successful, while Max Lorenz gives a fine example of *mezza voce* singing.

Dance Records. Those who care for high-brow jazz will certainly like a number called *Creole Lady*, played by Ambrose (Decca F 6075): it is most interesting. *Sweet Misery of Love* has all the exotic charm Guy Lombardo can impart (H.M.V. DB5113); and in the same *genre allumeur* I recommend *The Way You Look To-night*, by Carroll Gibbons and the Savoy Orpheans (Col. FB 1529), and *A Star Fell Out of Heaven*, by Ambrose (Decca F6089). *Love Made the Song*, by Lew Stone (Decca F6134), is pretty; *There Isn't Any Limit to My Love*, again by Carroll Gibbons (Col. FB1491), is gay; and there is a very good version of *Free*, by Jack Hylton (H.M.V. DB5102). Of the many renderings of *A Fine Romance* and *Pick Yourself Up* (both from *Swing Time*), I recommend Roy Fox in the first (H.M.V. BD5125), and Jimmy Dorsey in the second (Br. O2292); though Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers will doubtless soon give us even more authoritative renderings. But the tunes seem to me in themselves rather disappointing.

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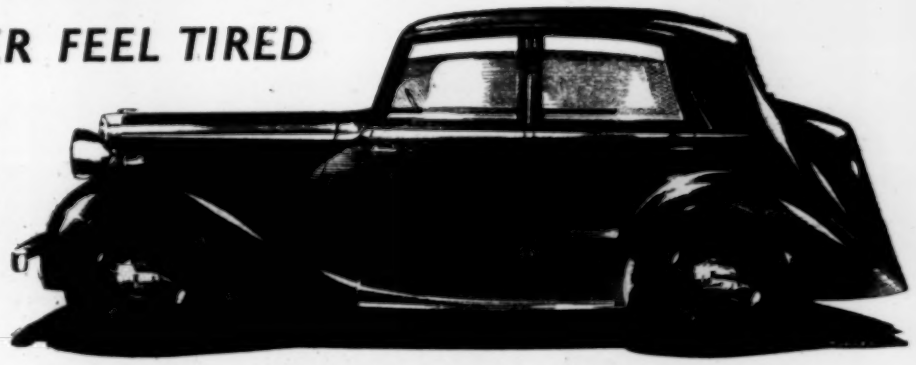

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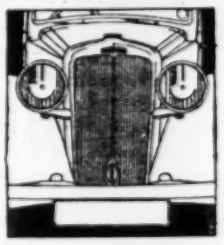

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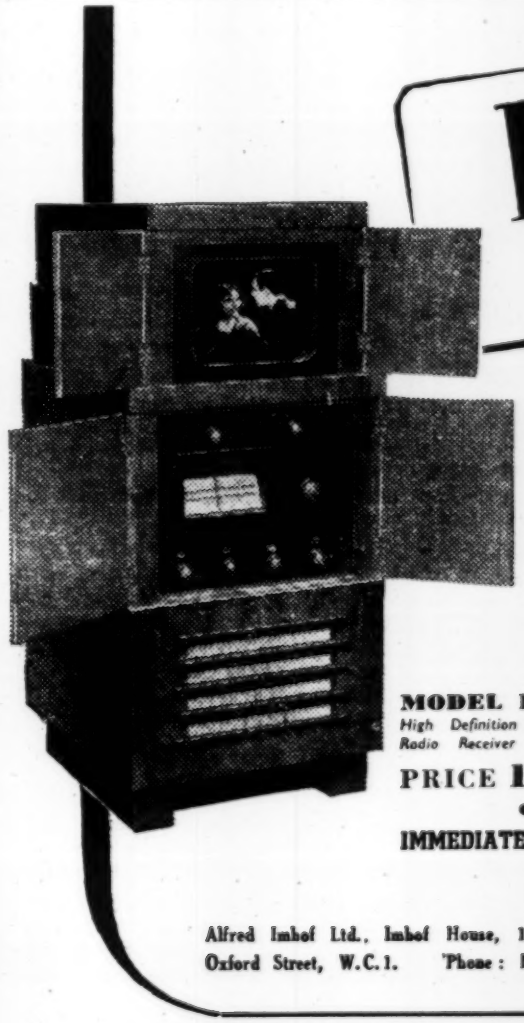

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Week-end Competitions

No. 349

Set by Raymond Mortimer

This competition is taken from the paper game "Telegrams." You are requested to compose three telegraphic messages, each of twelve words, which begin respectively with the twelve letters N, E, W, S, T, A, T, E, S, M, A, N, in this order. The messages are :

1. To make a proposal of marriage.
2. To condole with a friend (on any subject).
3. To warn someone to escape arrest by immediately leaving the country.

We offer the usual prizes for the best entries.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 347

Set by T. W. Earp

Competitors are invited to revive an ancient theme in a new mode. The usual prizes are offered for the two best poems on "Dejection," composed in the Surrealist manner. Verse, fixed or free, is limited to 12 lines and prose-poems to 150 words.

Report by T. W. Earp

Competitors responded with robust cheerfulness to this request for an exercise in the fashionable frivolity of surrealism. It is evident that a modern convention of depression is firmly established. But instead of the sighs, the weeping willows and the urns that foison, in the "Keepsakes" of a century ago, a less-picturesque apparatus of despair is now adopted. The unwelcome breakfast-plate, asphalt, and rats, occur continually in the entries submitted, though "H. H." must be credited with the fancy of "a hairbrush of razor-blades." In style, the brand of surrealism generally favoured was nearer Joyce than Carroll. "A. T. C.'s" line, "hollywood bullyvard malibu monico" is typical. "A. F. B. S.'s" entry was good—

Crown me not in amethyst
For I was never of this
Earth.
No centuries form a Catalyst
Twixt mundane and Celestial
Birth.
The need to die, the want to sigh
Are links in my Duplicity.
Whence furry shoes and stockings
vie
In endless multiplicity.

But on the whole it is too reasonable, a fault shared by the ingenious Pantoum of W. Summers, and by G. H. J. Eades, whose charming lyric starts—

Strip the last leaves with a cry, Poet !
Remember Shelley drooping by the Naples shore
In the blue nadir of an Italian noon ;
And you too, strip the leaves.

The first prize goes to "Tor," (please send name and address), who convincingly evokes a mood with just the right logical dislocation. The second is divided between R. D. C., for his piece of straightforward alembication, and M. Bredan, for an apt pastiche of the average surrealist production.

FIRST PRIZE
"DEJECTION"

Dejection—Erection of sculpted pose. Then widow's-weeds weaving patterns, arabesques of agitation, and horror of meaningless movement of hands clawing, clawing, blood-nailed. Destruction of tube-ticket to the dynamic syncopated cacophony of wheels revolving, mechanically, controlled, to their destination. Sensation of cessation of speed and the hands stilled, sätiated, palm-up in black lap. Paralysis of motion emotion and vacuity of eyes. Dejection-mask, death-mask, fluidity of sculpted pose.

TOR

SECOND PRIZE (1)
"DEJECTION"

Down there the wetbrown
Blackdrip watersliding tunnel.
My dumbbody drifts in the tunnel.
There is no end to the tunnel.
I have seen
The broken trees and the fearwolves mouthing
And the blank immediate faces
And far off
(Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird)
The Vulture.

R. D. C.

SECOND PRIZE (2)

I am incarnate dejection
Of the last rhapsody.
The coffin's laugh
To the cocktail glass,
The homicidal rosary,
Amid the grey rose of pituitary.
Let not umbrageous gaiety
Spoil the lovely monotony,
Of my titled dejection.
Sex as salt as the sea
From the umbrella within my head,
Drips into the bitter tea.

M. BREDAN

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 203.—SIX GOLFERS

"Six of us," said Divot, "had an amusing little competition over four holes while we were waiting for the championship to begin. Each of us played those four holes against bogey. We agreed that at the first hole a player who was up on bogey should score one point, while a player who was down on bogey should lose one point ; at the second hole, two points were to be scored by a player who was up on bogey, and two points lost by a player who was down ; at the third hole the win or loss was, similarly, to be three points ; at the fourth hole, four points. A player achieving a hole in bogey was neither to win points nor lose them. The winner of our competition was to be the player with the best score, calculated on the above basis."

"Did *you* win ? "

"I tied for the prize," said Divot.

"Jolly good," said I.

"It was a funny affair," said Divot, ruminatively. "No two of us produced similar cards. Yet each of us had an aggregate score of 1 over bogey, each of us had a different score at each of the four holes, and none of us was better at any hole than 1 under bogey, or worse than one over. And, by the way, none of us scored a 2."

"What is bogey for the various holes ? " I asked.

"Ah," said Divot, "you can work that out for yourself. But I'll tell you this much—that the aggregate of the four bogeys is 17."

What is bogey for each of the first four holes ?

[Note for the benefit of non-golfers. At any hole bogey is always 3, 4 or 5.]

PROBLEM 201.—DIGITS

By F. MORTIMER WENTWORTH

"My" method is fairer than Swindell's. This conclusion is, I think, obvious enough (in the sense that the expectancies of the two players are more nearly equal). But the respective expectancies need careful calculation—as two or three solvers have remarked, the problem is more interesting as a problem than as a game.

Under Swindell's scheme the dealer stands to lose $\frac{11}{9}$ points on each deal.
Under "my" scheme, he stands to gain 11/27 points on each deal.

A Stratford-on-Avon correspondent sends me the following. Whether it is intended as a comment on "Digits" is, however, not clear.

Grey clouds, endless rain.
The man, scowling, leans against the lamp-post.
The water drips down his neck.
He is oblivious of everything but his own wretched gloom.
He can do nothing but stand there sulking, brooding.
Turning over in his mind morbid, egotistical thoughts,
Propounding a new theory of misery.

PROBLEM 200.—REVOLT IN CUBA

A set of Low's Cartoons goes to : Whitaker, Cleeve Prior Vicarage, Evesham.

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Some comments : "Good. And good God ! " (W.S.B.). "No wonder there was a riot" (R.J.W.). "One of the best" (E.M.W.). "A real boundary hit" (W.F.L.).

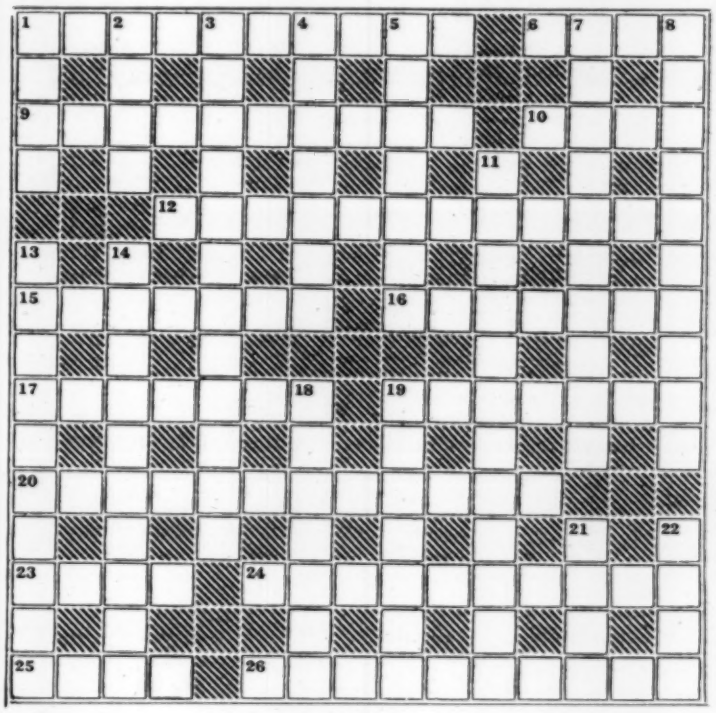
80 competitors sent in solutions, of which 17 were correct.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 350

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Mrs. K. Watkins, 13 Lewisham Park, S.E.13.

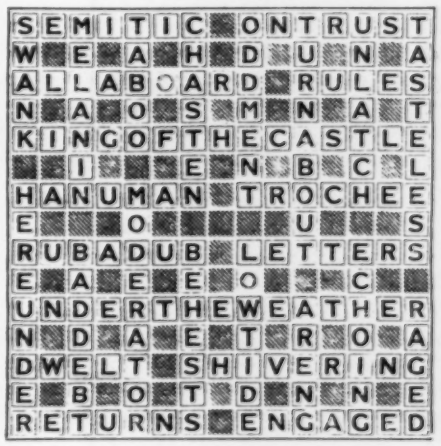
ACROSS

1. A hard hat worn at a rakish angle no doubt.
6. One of the pikes that "were all broken and bent."
9. Not the keels of the Senior Service.
10. In summer they are to be had à la cart.
12. Jackets for soldiers when they go square pushing with their canes perhaps.
15. Garden implement for an artist, not Dutch.
16. It takes knights in order.
17. The artists' board?
19. "In —— measureless to man Down to a sunless sea."
20. Charlie Chaplin's version of a bit of Army drill.
23. Oriental form of seat.
24. Alternatives when Opportunity's forelock is within one's grasp.
25. Part of a window that is waisted on a girl.
26. How the theatrical manager stages a revival.

DOWN

1. Anyone might get bitten with it in the wild state.
2. Except rescue.
3. A foul place to get a blow.
4. Disputatious way for university mathematicians to behave.
5. Adam's mate takes a little time off.
7. Charming people who can spell.
8. How to keep a bird when you want it to go high.
11. Feats performed by 7 mice with a hat.
13. The preacher's audience?
14. What motor boxes do for hunters.
18. As it rose in the eye it's presumably a stye.
19. 150 to love.
21. It's swan song, as it were, is famous in literature.
22. The M.A.'s handmaidens?

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

MR. ROOSEVELT AND THE FOREIGN INVESTOR—THE NEW FUNDING LOAN—THE WOOLWORTH BONUS AND MY STATISTICAL ASSISTANT

HAVING assured my readers last week that the British Government puts no obstacle in the way of their transferring capital from London to New York, I was distressed to observe President Roosevelt interfering and trying to put a spoke in their wheel. The occasion was a press conference at the White House and instead of making unpleasant remarks about big business in America the President directed popular hatred against the foreign speculator. It is rare to find Mr. Roosevelt solicitous about Wall Street, but he declared that Mr. Eccles, the Governor of the Federal Reserve Board, and other responsible officials had been advising him upon "the great danger" of the huge holdings of American stocks by foreign investors and speculators. The Federal Reserve Board had estimated that foreign funds in the United States had reached a total of $7,000 millions, of which approximately $5,500 millions were invested in securities. At any time, said the President, these securities might be dumped on the market and create immense difficulties. They constituted "hot money" and might become a disturbing factor in foreign exchange as well as in the credit situation. Mr. Roosevelt was, of course, talking hot air. Only a month ago Mr. Morgenthau, Secretary of the Treasury, was reported as informing Senator Vandenberg that foreign buying of American securities largely represented long-term investment which would be no more subject to sudden liquidation than would investment in the same securities by American nationals. There is naturally a short-term speculative account in American stocks operated by foreigners, but it is nothing like the amount invested for long-term.

* * *

The President has asked the Federal Reserve Board and the Treasury to draft, if possible, the necessary legislation to deal with this situation, but was he serious? Mr. Morgenthau has already hinted that he will do nothing. If he wishes to discourage foreign investment in American stocks the President can impose a penal tax on foreign holdings, but, after long discussion, it was found advisable this year to limit the tax on interest and dividends payable to foreign individual holders to 10 per cent. (15 per cent. on interest if the holder is a foreign company). If this tax were heavily increased it would cause the slump in the stock markets which Mr. Roosevelt seems to fear. It would penalise the long-term investor who buys for income and encourage the short-term speculator who buys solely for capital appreciation. The movements of foreign capital are, of course, a threat to stability of the exchanges, but the Exchange Funds, working under the new gentleman's agreement, should be able to cope with anything short of a combined flight of British and foreign capital out of sterling. Probably Mr. Roosevelt's alarmist remarks to the pressmen were designed to put a brake upon the stock market advance lest any dangerous inflation of security values should develop. He may kid American investors, but I do not think he will kid the foreigners. As long as the United States allow the outside world to send them gold they do not want and with the dollar proceeds of the gold to buy dollar securities, it is only natural that the foreign investor should come to Wall Street to share in the profits of the American recovery. If Mr. Roosevelt wishes to reserve the profits of his recovery entirely for Americans he should refuse to take foreign gold, abandon the gold standard and break the gentleman's currency agreement. If he is not prepared to let the dollar go hang, he should not attack the foreign investor who is far less likely to dump good American stocks on the market than the American speculator. I adhere, therefore, to the American equities recommended last week, which could have been acquired at reasonable prices during the week-end reaction. If they were not bought then, I advise waiting for the next reaction.

* * *

The Government issue of £100,000,000 2¾ per cent. Funding Loan, 1952/57 is a stop-gap. It provides for the £30 millions of 2½ per cent. Treasury Bonds due on February 1st, 1937, and for the unconverted balance of the United Kingdom 5½ per cent. 20-year dollar bonds, amounting to $20 millions, and leaves approximately £64 millions for the funding of floating debt. The floating debt at £869 millions is actually £66 millions less than a year ago, so that a funding operation was not a vital necessity, but the Treasury may take the view that a really large loan will be necessary before the end of 1937 to pay for our rearmament and that a funding of the floating debt at the present time will tend to keep short money rates low. The only significant feature of the new loan is its issue price, namely 98½, which afforded yields slightly above—not, as on previous occasions, below—the prevailing market rates. The effect was to depress immediately the prices of the comparatively short loans as will be seen from the following table:

	Price before New Funding Loan.	Price after Loan.	Gross Yield % Flat.	Gross Yield % to Redemption (adjusted).*
Funding 3% 1959-69 ..	102 7/16	102½	£2 18 9	£2 17 0
Conversion 3% 1948-53.	104 7/16	104½	2 17 9	2 10 3
Conversion 2½% 1944-49	101 7/16	101½	2 9 6	2 6 6
Funding 2½% 1956-61 ..	93 7/16	93	2 13 9	2 19 9
New Funding 2¾% 1952-57	98½		2 15 9	2 19 6

* Gross equivalent of net redemption yield with tax at 4*s.* 9*d.*

* * *

No doubt the Treasury consider that in view of the failure of the recent 3 per cent. Home Corporation loans issued at 99½, they could not have done better, but why did they not issue a five-year bond at, say, 1½ per cent.? From the Treasury point of view, a five-year bond might have been much cheaper.

* * *

If I had been writing for the financial column of my school magazine in 1909, no doubt I should have recommended Woolworth shares at 5*s.*, and the judicious investment of one week's pocket money would now have accumulated to £65,000 (the figures are not my own but are near enough). In more recent times my Statistical Assistant and I have collaborated in making comparisons between Woolworth and Marks and Spencer, usually to the detriment of the latter. On the 12th September, 1936, my Statistical Assistant wrote that he was beginning to prefer Marks and Spencer to Woolworth. In actual fact he was hopelessly wrong, for the Woolworth bonus, foreshadowed at the time, was far in excess of market estimates and the price has risen from 147*s.* 6*d.* in September to 168*s.* 9*d.*, while Marks and Spencer A Shares are around the same price at 89*s.* My Statistical Assistant now writes: Capital bonuses do not produce higher profits and the shares should still be valued on current and prospective earnings. Both companies are still expanding, Marks and Spencer more rapidly than Woolworth. The following table gives the yields on the basis of profit estimates

	Present Price.	Dividend.	1935 Yield %	1935 Earnings.	1935 Yield %	Estimated 1936 Earnings.	Estimated 1936 Yield %
Woolworths Ord. Shs. 5/- ...	168/9	100%	£2 19 0	133%	£3 19 0	141%	£4 3 0
Marks and Spencer A Shares 5/-	89/-	40%	£2 5 0	73%	£4 2 0	81%	£4 11 0

I cannot believe that Woolworth will maintain the same rate of dividend on the doubled capital as the Gentleman in the Corner Seat said this morning, and I still maintain that both shares are intrinsically dear.

Toreador: Good things are never cheap and Woolworth, you must admit, is a good business. These well-managed chain stores have by no means reached the peak of their expansion. First, the national income is still increasing. This year we may estimate it at £4,200 millions against £3,960 millions in 1935 and £3,313 millions in 1932. Secondly, the chain store has still wide areas to conquer from the small shopkeeper. Thirdly, competition among chain stores is not increasing so fast as customers. Perhaps the Woolworth 100 per cent. bonus indicates that the cash amount of dividends paid is to be increased. Last year 100 per cent. was paid on the old shares and perhaps 55 per cent. may be paid on the new.

Statistical Assistant: Well, I would sooner hold Woolworth of America which owns over 50 per cent. of Woolworth of England, say, 8,000,000 out of the 15,000,000 old shares of 5*s.* These were valued in their last balance sheet at $228 millions and are now worth over $330 millions—a nice little nest-egg. Up to October 31st Woolworth of America sales were 7.4 per cent. above those of the corresponding period of 1935. Earnings for the year are estimated at $3.60 per share, so that at $70 the earnings yield is 5.14 per cent. Deducting the market capitalisation of Woolworth of England from the total Woolworth of America market capitalisation, we obtain a figure of $35.86 per Woolworth of America share which would allow an earnings yield of 7.04 per cent on the estimated American earnings less Woolworth of England earnings.

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

A Course of Two Lectures on "THE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF SWEDEN," will be given by PROF. ELI F. HECKSCHER, Professor of Economic History in the Handelshogskolan, Stockholm, at THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS (Houghton Street, Aldwych, W.C.2), on THURSDAYS, NOVEMBER 26th and DECEMBER 3rd, at 5 p.m. At the first Lecture the Chair will be taken by His Excellency the Swedish Minister (Baron Palmstierna).

A Course of Three Lectures on "LA PHILOSOPHIE DE CARLYLE," will be given by PROF. VICTOR BASCH, Honorary Professor of Philosophy at the Sorbonne, Paris, at KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON (Strand, W.C.2), on NOVEMBER 23rd, 24th and 25th, at 5.30 p.m. At the first Lecture the Chair will be taken by Miss Hilda D. Oakeley, D.Lit., M.A.

A Lecture on "THE CHOICE OF LAW BY THE PARTIES IN INTERNATIONAL CONTRACTS" will be given by PROF. MARTIN WOLFF, Emeritus Professor of Law in the University of Berlin, at UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON (Gower Street, W.C.1.) on THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3rd, at 5.30 p.m.

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DIRECTIONS IN CONTEMPORARY POETRY. The Talks specialising on "FRANCE," and "THE FUTURE" will be held at NEW BOOKS COFFEE ROOM, 4 Parton Street, Red Lion Square, and NOT at Bogey's Bar as previously advertised. Mondays, November 23rd and 30th, at 8 p.m.

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, Holborn.—Sunday, November 22nd, at 11 a.m.: MRS. MARY A. HAMILTON: "TOLERATION." 6.30 p.m. Concert Chamber Music. Admission Free. Visitors welcome.

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W.2. Sunday, November 22nd, at 11, F. S. GRIMWOOD: "IS OUR THOUGHT IN TOUCH WITH REALITY?" 6.30, H. J. BLACKHAM: "THE MEANS AND THE END."

GUILDHOUSE, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, November 22nd. At 4, Tea-Table Conference: MISS SOMERVILLE, of the Industrial Christian Fellowship. At 6.30, The REV. A. H. GRAY, D.D.

ARTISTS' INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

LECTURE.

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